

cruise

TRADE NEWS

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pull-out feature

INSIDE VIEW:
CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE
HAPAG-LLOYD
HANSEATIC INSPIRATION
SAGA SPIRIT
OF DISCOVERY

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- WE DISCUSS: FAMILY CRUISING • THE ELBE RIVER



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From £2,895pp

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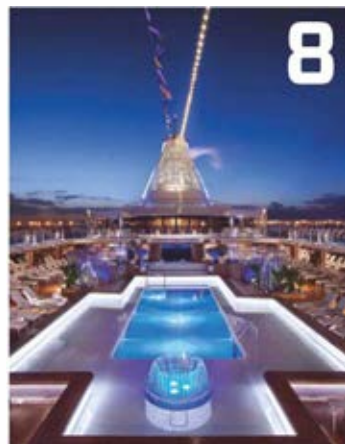
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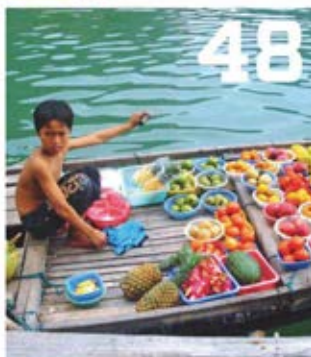
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titan
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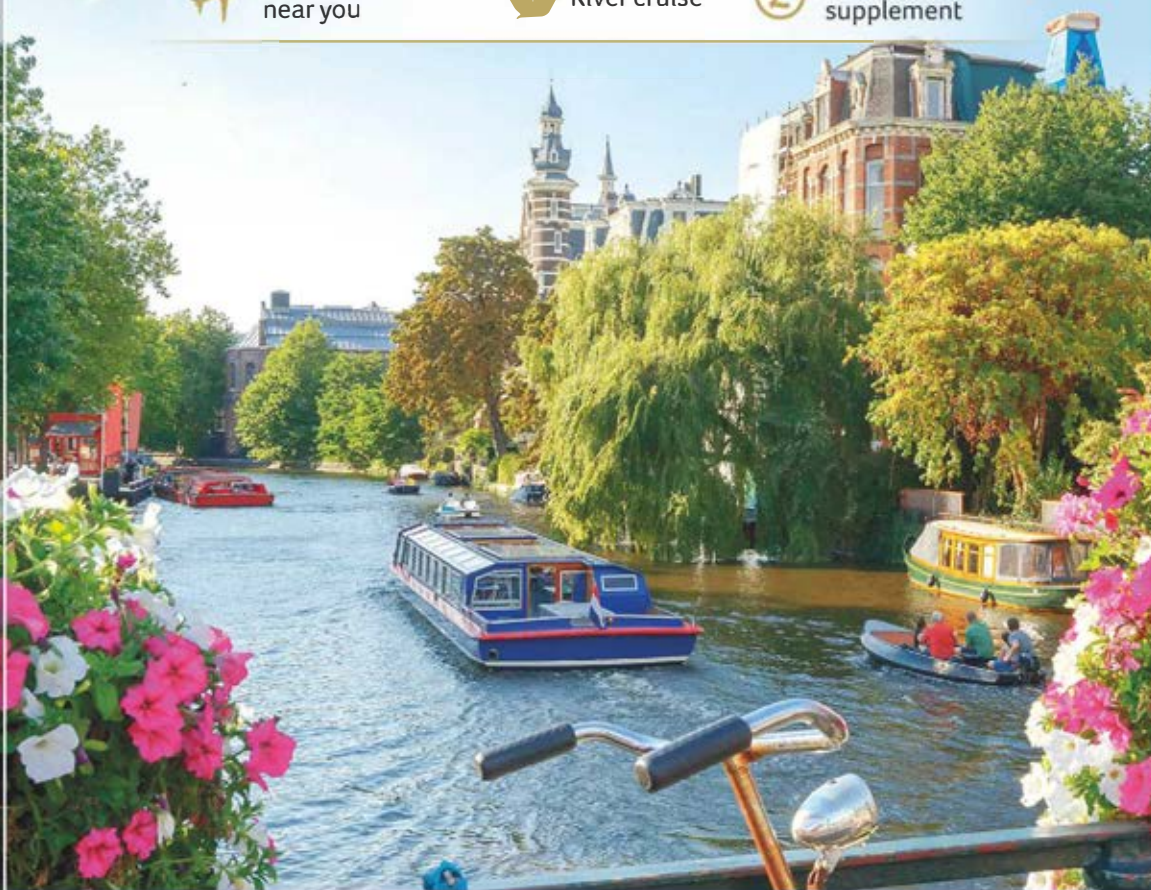
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Letter

On the crest of a wave...



The year is already gathering pace, with ship launches, awards ceremonies and events aplenty – there's never a dull moment in the world of cruise!

The Celebrity Travel Agent Appreciation Awards is a major event that rewards cruise agents for their hard work and dedication to selling cruise holidays; if you weren't at the ceremony held in London in January, you can read and see more on page 25.

From sales gurus to CEOs, there are some hugely talented people driving the industry forward, and we've grilled them for their 2018 predictions on page 33.

Also this issue, we check out two forthcoming ships which are in the game-changer league – discover Hapag Lloyd's Hanseatic Inspiration and Saga's Spirit of Discovery on pages 38 and 56.

Whether your clients are first-timers or seasoned cruisers, the south of France will never go out of fashion as a river cruise destination – our ship review on the elegant, well-equipped Amadeus Provence on page 53 should give you some sales inspiration.

Other destinations in focus include Vancouver, South East Asia and London – the latter of which is currently hosting the spectacular, Viking-sponsored exhibition Ocean Liners: Speed & Style at the V&A. Have you got your tickets yet?

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca".

Rebecca Barnes
Editor
@rebeccaCTN

NEW SHIPS

Hapag-Lloyd announces catalogue launch for Hanseatic Inspiration

Hapag-Lloyd Cruises has launched its first English-language catalogue for new luxury expedition class ship Hanseatic Inspiration, which will take to the sea in October 2019, expanding the existing fleet.

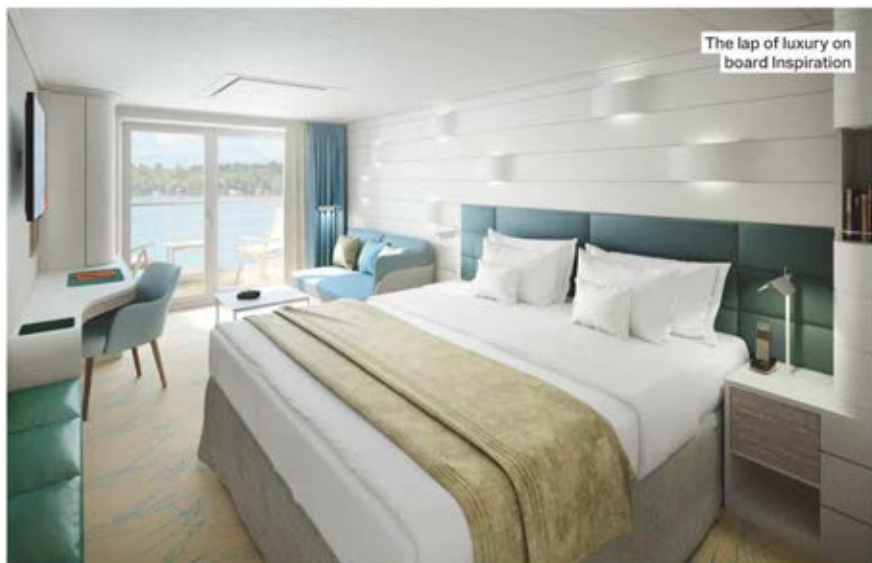
The catalogue launch in London gave guests a preview of 22 expedition routes from October 2019 to September 2020, including the Arctic and Antarctic, the Amazon and the Great Lakes of North America. It was presented by Hapag-Lloyd Cruises CEO Karl J. Pojer.

The maiden voyage will take place in Europe when Hanseatic Inspiration begins a 15-day cruise from Antwerp to Tenerife in October 2019.

The ship can accommodate up to 230 guests, or 199 guests on Antarctic cruises. With 120 cabins and suites (ranging from the Panoramic Cabin at 21m² to the Grand Suite at 71m²), almost all outside cabins have their own balcony or French balcony, while the interior design is inspired by nature and uses premium materials.

Raising the bar in the expedition cruise segment, the ship boasts the highest ice class rating for passenger ships (PC6).

Set to run on low polluting 70 per cent marine gas oil, other eco features include an SCR catalytic converter, bio



waste water treatment and energy-saving propellers.

On board, the Ocean Academy is a place where guests can use interactive technology to discover comprehensive background information on the regions they are visiting.

Retractable glass balconies on the sun deck give guests the feeling of hovering

directly above the ocean. Guests can also stand at the bow of the ship, putting them a lot closer to the action – even closer than the captain!

According to Pojer, there have already been 2,400 pre-booking enquiries. "There is definitely potential for top-quality product on a five-star level in the UK," he said.

INDUSTRY NEWS

Are you ready for the General Data Protection act?

Travel agents need to be ready for new European legislation coming into force on 25 May.

ABTA has said the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) act will require those who work in or sell travel – especially travel agents – to comply or risk a fine. "GDPR is particularly important for travel firms due to the amount of personal data they hold about their customers. If you do not get this right, not only are you potentially putting your customers at risk, you may be hit with a very hefty fine from the regulators," said a spokesperson. The regulation, which

ensures the right of privacy for all customers that a company might hold data on, applies to all EU companies regardless of size. It ensures data is monitored to prevent security breaches. Companies will need the services of a data protection officer to ensure compliance – failure to do so can result in fines of up to £17 million. Smaller companies should seek out GDPR-ready programmes, tailored to travel.

Visit <https://abta.com/news-and-views/news/data-protection-getting-ready-for-the-gdpr>



REFURBS

Azamara's UK refit for Pursuit



Azamara Club Cruises has announced that the refit of its new ship Azamara Pursuit will take place in the UK. This is the first time that the owner of the Azamara brand, Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd,

has chosen a UK shipyard for such a project. The news comes as the ship prepares to go into wet dock in Belfast.

Its maiden voyage on 1 August will depart from Southampton, with work

expected to commence in spring 2018. Work will be completed by the end of July.

Larry Pimentel, president and CEO of Azamara Club Cruises, told Cruise Trade News: "I'm excited that the product has been so well received – we hit 70 per cent of our sales goals by 1 January and 40 per cent of our booked guests are British. There's such an affinity between the brand and the UK guests... Growth has been year-on-year and keeps on rising." Azamara Pursuit will join the line's existing two-ship fleet in August 2018, after being transformed as a carbon copy of sister ships Azamara Quest and Azamara Journey.

INDUSTRY NEWS

A-ROSA buyout



German river cruise company A-ROSA is to be acquired by UK investors. Private equity group Duke Street has agreed to buy the German upmarket river cruise company from Waterland Private Equity. The amount has not been disclosed.

The company has enjoyed a strong following in its German home market, and more recently in the UK. Investors said the sale would enable the cruise operator to expand into new markets and offerings.

Duke Street said A-ROSA has

benefited from a growing base of affluent, older consumers, 'ensuring the river cruise segment performed strongly in the last economic downturn' and that it 'tended to attract repeat bookings'.

A-ROSA, which offers river cruises on Europe's Danube, Rhine and Moselle, Rhône, Saône and Seine rivers, was established in 2001 as a subsidiary of P&O Princess Cruises. It has approximately 600 employees and operates a fleet of 11 vessels.

ECO NEWS

Ponant to launch LNG-powered ship

Ponant is set to launch its first clean-fuelled icebreaker vessel to take passengers to rarely explored polar destinations around the Arctic. It will be the world's first icebreaker vessel to be powered by Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG).

The luxury vessel, which will feature 135 staterooms and premium service, will take passengers to rarely explored polar destinations such as the true geographical North Pole, the Weddell Sea, the Ross Sea and Peter I Island.

It is expected to be completed by 2021, in order to comply with environmental rules. Environmental regulations, as part of Marpol VI, will be reinforced by 2020.



Global Ports Holding plc (GPH), has appointed **Dr. Ece Gürsoy** as chief legal officer. Prior to joining GPH, Gürsoy served for six years as the chief legal officer, company secretary and executive director of Lightsource Renewable Energy Holdings Limited.



Scenic and Emerald Waterways has recruited **Danny Joel** as sales manager, south. Joel previously worked with Sandals and Beaches, Club Med and Caribbours. "It is fantastic to be part of a team which is dedicated in supporting and working with the trade," he said.



Janet Parton has been appointed director of sales at Cosmos and Avalon Waterways. Formerly head of sales, she helped to build a loyal community of agents, partners and customers and drove traffic and leads through strategic sales initiatives.



Georgia Lewis is the new regional sales executive for Regent Seven Seas. Lewis will work with travel partners in Birmingham and the south as part of the sales team restructure. She will also work in conjunction with Regent's business development team to ensure that new and existing agents grow and maximise their luxury cruise business.

NEW SHIPS

Edge completes ahead of schedule

Celebrity Edge, Celebrity Cruises' newest arrival, is offering five new sailings – including a second maiden voyage as well as a mini-preview sailing. The news comes to mark the ship's completion before schedule. The schedule change, which will see the ship completed by 21 November rather than in December, enables Celebrity Cruises to offer an additional seven-night maiden voyage on Celebrity Edge's alternating eastern and western Caribbean itineraries, as well as an option to book back-to-back sailings for a 14-night journey. Its new journey, Maiden Voyage East, will depart from Fort Lauderdale on 16 December 2018, and visit San Juan, Tortola and Philipsburg. Four new Edge preview sailings will also be added, departing on 21 November, 24 November, 3 December and 6 December. Celebrity Edge will homeport in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and make its first sailing on 21 November 2018.



SURVEYS

Oceania tops satisfaction survey



Oceania Cruises has topped cruise customer satisfaction charts in a major 2018 survey by consumer group Which?.

Ranking 13 main cruise liners for value for money, port excursions, cabins, entertainment, food and drink, facilities, space on deck and whether reality met description, Oceania scored 89 per cent,

topping the board for almost all categories apart from entertainment.

Norwegian Cruise Lines came last, with a score of 60 per cent – losing most ratings over its alleged poor 'passenger-to-space ratio' and 'port excursions'. Oceania's cruises average around £283 a night, while Norwegian charges £175. The report said:

"Although there's praise for Norwegian's 'freestyle dining', meaning there are no fixed times or pre-assigned seating, it gets just three stars for passenger-to-space ratio."

Second was Saga with 85 per cent, while the best large cruise liner went to P&O with a customer ranking of 71 per cent for its on-board facilities and passenger-to-space ratio.

RIVER CRUISES

Viking's new river cruises

Viking has announced its new 2019 River Cruises programme, featuring destinations across Europe, France, Portugal, Egypt, China and Russia, along with excursions. The launch comes with a £1,000 discount for any customers who book before March.

Highlights include Portugal's River of Gold itinerary, a 10-day journey experiencing the renaissance of Lisbon, the university towns of Iberia in Spain, and the Douro River Valley.

The programme includes eight guided tours departing between January and December 2019. Other cruises include Elegant Elbe, Rhine, Danube, Eastern Europe, around the Rhine Valley, wine tours of France, waterways of Russia, ancient Egyptian tours and China and Cambodia.



Viking: refreshing river cruises

MARKETING NEWS

Cunard's £3m marketing campaign



Cunard has launched the first part of its £3 million marketing campaign. 'So much to do, so much time' highlights the best parts of its guests' cruise-related experiences. The campaign, which runs throughout February, kicked off by highlighting the freedom that voyages can offer passengers travelling on one of Cunard's high-class liners.

Angus Struthers, marketing vice president of Cunard, said: "Following our global research earlier in the year, there were three clear elements that 13,000 guests told us they loved about Cunard. The idea that a Cunard voyage truly helps guests feel free was just one of these feelings."

The 'So much to do, so much time' campaign launched across national print media in the UK in January 2018, with activity across digital, PR and social media.

GETTING SOCIAL

What you've been talking about this month...



@avalontradeUK

We're so excited to be hosting agents on-board Avalon for the @CLIAUK Asia Conference! #AvalonInAsia



@PrincessCruises

Play in the trees this summer! Visit our custom-designed treehouse at Mt. McKinley Princess Wilderness Lodge to hear Tales from the Sourdough Expedition, sample birch syrups at Sappy Hour and test your knowledge of the Great Land



@VeganCruiser

Have you cruised the Baltic and called at my former home port Helsinki? Busiest passenger port last year, apparently



Viking Cruises UK

We are delighted to announce that our chosen charity partner for 2018 is the UK's leading youth cricket and disability sports charity, The Lord's Taverners. We will be working alongside the charity on a number of fundraising initiatives throughout the year to raise vital funds to give disadvantaged and disabled young people the chance to engage in sport and recreational activities in their communities. Watch this space!



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INDUSTRY NEWS

The millennial market is on the up



Cruise travel stats look impressive

Cruise travel is on the rise, with a projected 27.2 million passengers expected to sail in 2018 – an increase in demand of 20.5 per cent in the last five years. Findings from CLIA's latest Travel Trends report said projections for 2018 show a greater push towards experiential travel, including cultural immersion and extreme adventures. A focus on sustainable tourism, and more river and small ship cruising, will continue to gain traction. Destinations such as the Baltics, Canada, Alaska and Antarctica, as

well as wellness trips and smart technology, will also be big for 2018. The report runs alongside ABTA's recent Travel Trends 2018 findings, stating that 14 per cent of UK holidaymakers planned to take a cruise this year – almost double the number in 2017. It added that European river cruising looks set to continue in 2018 – something that has gained traction with the quickly developing millennial market, whose members seek more active trips with more adventurous elements.

SILVER CLOUD FACTS AT THE SHIPYARD...



3,400
litres of milk

15,000
litres of water



72,000
Plastic forks
36,000
Plastic knives
18,000
Plastic spoons



16,000
mini juices

117,000
Plates: 10 inch



Date for the diary

CLIA is hosting its Asia River Cruise & Destination Forum in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The trade fair and conference sessions will be followed by a three or four-night sailing on the Mekong River. There is also an option for a two-night pre-fam in Singapore, courtesy of the Singapore Tourist Board. The event takes place from 10-15 April 2018; tickets can be booked through eventbrite.co.uk

Croisi's new itineraries

CroisiEurope's new itinerary for 2018 will feature its popular Loire cruise combined with a trip to the Châteaux of the Loire Valley and an overnight stay in Paris. The cruise, on MS Loire Princesse, departs between April and October 2018. CroisiEurope has also introduced a 10-day itinerary to sail on the St Lawrence River and Lake Ontario on its new 68-guest MS Jacques Cartier. Cruises depart between August and October in 2018 and June and October in 2019.

Clever cruising

The country's first interactive cruise store has opened its doors. Utilising virtual reality and interactive maps, deal specialist Cruise1st hopes to attract more new-to-cruise customers. Located at The Lowry Shopping Centre in Manchester, the store will provide customers with real-life experts, while utilising the latest technology to take virtual 3D tours of ships, resorts and hotels. Multiple touchscreen monitors will provide key information where consumers can research and plan their cruise.

Bookings on the up

Online travel forum Travelzoo has said more than a third of its customers plan to take a cruise this year – an increase of 11 per cent since 2015. Joel Brandon-Bravo, general manager at Travelzoo UK, said: "Cruise is becoming an ever-bigger part of our business. Our data shows that not only is the appetite for cruising among our members growing, but over a quarter of those who've cruised have been on two to three cruises, while 22 per cent have been on a whopping eight or more. We're seeing more exciting and inspiring itineraries from the cruise partners we work with now than ever before."

THERE'S MORE THAN ONE REASON
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10

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Movers & Shakers

If you only have five minutes to read the magazine, you'll want to check out our hot picks this month...



1. FLOWER POWER

Viking Cruises' sixth garden at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2018 is a wellness garden designed by Paul Hervey-Brookes. Inspired by the outdoors, it draws on the Nordic landscape and celebrates the connection between nature and wellbeing – a connection at the heart of the design of Viking's Scandi-chic ships. The garden explores the three dimensions of wellness: eating well, living well, and the idea of balance brought about by interacting with the landscape and living in harmony with nature.

Catch the Viking Wellness garden from 22-26 May 2018.

2. GO GREEN

Celebrity Cruises' Lawn Club is one of a kind – the only real grass lawn on the ocean. Sitting on the top deck of its Solstice Class ships – Eclipse, Silhouette, Equinox, Reflection and Solstice – this is one ultimate picnic venue. Guests can kick back to a jazz concert, before fortifying themselves with a hearty barbecued meal, then embarking on a game of boules by (or on) the sea.



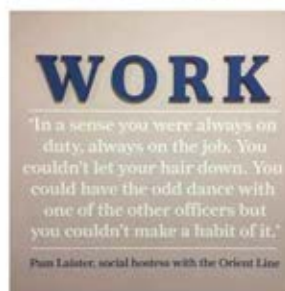
3. OCEAN EXHIBIT

A must for your diary is Ocean Liners: Speed & Style, an exhibition at the Victoria & Albert museum from 3 February-10 June 2018. Sponsored by Viking Cruises, and the first-ever exhibition to explore the design and cultural impact of the ocean liner, it will explore all aspects of ship design from engineering, architecture and interiors to the fashion and lifestyle on board. Over 250 objects will be showcased, including furniture, textiles, photographs, posters and film. Tickets cost £18; book online at vam.ac.uk/oceanliners or by calling 0800 912 6961 (booking fee applies).



4. CLEAR VISION

The extendable glass infinity balconies on Hapag-Lloyd's forthcoming Hanseatic Inspiration expedition ship do give us a touch of the heebie-jeebies, we admit, but at the same time we would love to experience them while sailing in the polar regions – with a glass of wine in hand. Total life goals...



5. VINTAGE VIEW

Spotted at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich – these brilliant vintage photographs depicting the golden age of cruising. Entry to the National Maritime Museum is free; visit rmg.co.uk/national-maritime-museum



How do cruise lines attract families?

Some perceptions around cruising are still hard-wired into the UK psyche. Although the trend towards skip-gen cruises is gathering pace, family cruises continue to be a challenge. So how does the industry attract more families?

Alessandra Pierleoni

Marketing and direct sales director, MSC Cruises



As a family-owned company, we understand all those little things that make travelling into a holiday for parents and families. Through our partnerships with trusted brands like LEGO, Chicco and Masterchef we aim to provide an unforgettable holiday experience for all the family.

These partnerships have allowed us to enhance the on-board offering to include not just activities for adults and children, but also, and most importantly, activities for families to do together so that each family group can do things their own way. It's about offering them a choice and helping them to tailor their cruise experience to fit with their loved ones.

"Through our partnerships with trusted brands we aim to provide an unforgettable experience for all the family"

Lynn Narraway

UK managing director, Holland America



The powerful on-board partnerships we have, such as those with BBC Earth and America's Test Kitchen, offer enhanced entertainment and enrichment for all ages, including specially designed activities for children.

Kids and tweens may discover amazing facts about dinosaurs with BBC Earth fact shows, learn to make pizza or cookies at special 45-minute ATK cooking classes, or join scavenger hunts or Junior Ranger activities ashore in Alaska. Teens (13-17) have the adult-free Loft (designed to resemble a New York artist's loft) with music and games consoles, as well as organised deck events.

We therefore promote ourselves more as an inclusive cruise line for discerning travellers of all ages – and part of that experience is our excellent family amenities, making us attractive for couples with children who are looking for a five-star destination and culturally immersive holidays.

Michael Steffl

Head of International sales, Hapag-Lloyd Cruises



With our luxury ship, the five-stars-plus-rated Europa 2, we have identified the importance of focusing our attention not only on attracting professionals and couples but also families.

This is a more unusual strategy in the industry for a luxury cruise line to adopt. The cruise itineraries we offer in the main are shorter in length, allowing working professionals to take a holiday away with their children. We cater for three different age groups, tailoring family-themed programmes, excursions and on-board facilities for each. Childcare is available and there are dedicated family apartments, plus additional extras such as a late sleeper service for parents.

Is there a hot topic that you'd like us to discuss?
Let us know by tweeting @cruisetradenews or email rebecca.barnes@realresponsemedia.com



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Alaska, NATURE'S GALLERY

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11 days | 27 August 2018 – REGATTA

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CATEGORIES AND OLIFE CHOICE FARES PER GUEST FROM*

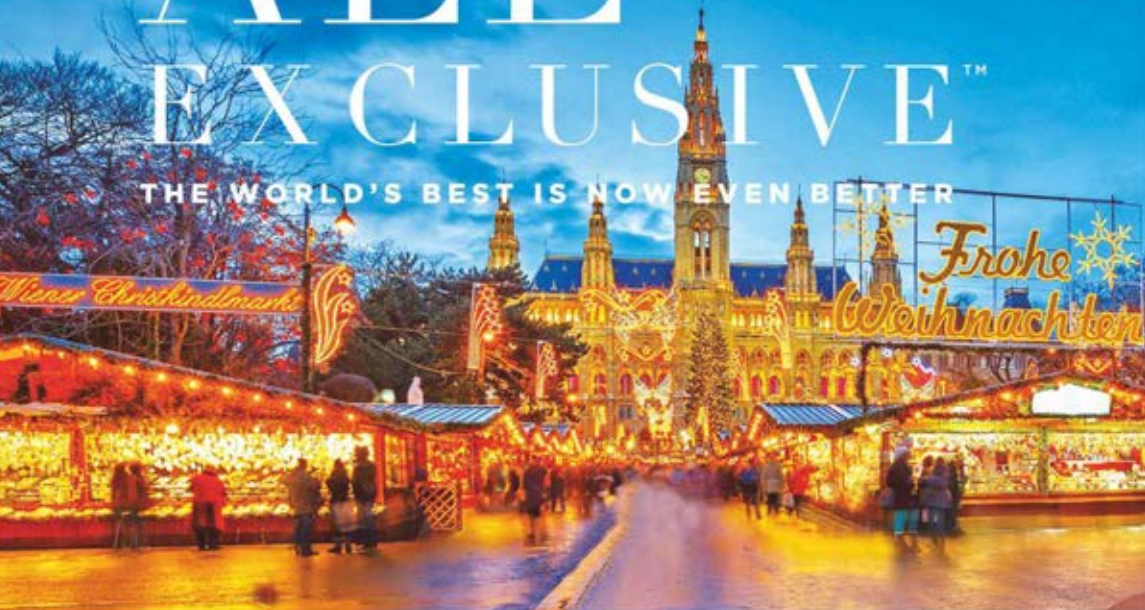
VERANDA	CONCIERGE	PENTHOUSE
£5,009	£5,239	£6,329

Call Oceania Cruises at 0345 505 1920 | Visit OceaniaCruises.com or Contact Your Travel Agent

TERMS AND CONDITIONS *OLife Choice offers and fares expire on 31st March 2018. All fares are per person in Pounds Sterling, valid for residents of the United Kingdom, based on double occupancy (unless otherwise noted), for new bookings only, subject to availability and may be withdrawn at any time. For current pricing visit OceaniaCruises.com. OLife Choice amenities are per stateroom, based on double occupancy and subject to change. Free gratuities are available on select sailings and valid for bookings made on select categories and do not apply to service charges relating to private dining, spa treatments or alcoholic beverages which will incur a compulsory service fee (approx. 18%). Free Unlimited Internet is one per stateroom. Owner's, Vista & Oceania Suites receive access for two devices per suite. OLife Choice Free Shore Excursions and the Unlimited Passport Collection vary by voyage and exclude Oceania Select, Oceania Exclusive, Executive Collection, Food & Wine Trails, Wellness and Culinary Discovery Tours. Voyages up to 9 days receive 4 free excursions; 10-13 days receive 6 free excursions; 14+ days receive 8 free excursions. If shore excursion amenity is selected, all excursions must be chosen at least 14 days prior to sailing. OLife Choice Beverage Package amenity is House Select and is one per full-fare paying adult of 21 years of age or older with a maximum of two per stateroom. Free Shipboard Credit is one per stateroom, based on double occupancy and subject to change. Guests in the same stateroom must choose the same OLife Choice amenity. Not all promotions are combinable. Free pre- or post-cruise land tours are on select voyages, based on double occupancy, capacity controlled, subject to limited availability and to change. The Deluxe Land Collection upgrade price varies. Upgrade and voyage credit are per person. For itineraries shown with multiple departures, sailing prices may vary and any "Fares From" pricing is based on the lowest available category at the time of publication, unless otherwise indicated. Cruise Ship Fuel Surcharge may apply and, if applicable, is additional revenue to Oceania Cruises. Special Fares are based on published International Full Brochure Fares. Oceania Cruises reserves the right to correct errors or omissions and to change any and all fares, fees, offers and surcharges at any time. Suite and stateroom measurements are approximate, and those in same category may vary in size. Suite and stateroom may also have different furniture placement than depicted in the photographs. Free Internet usage is subject to time and data limitations; Internet usage fees may apply. Airfare programme is limited to flights originating or terminating in London, regional connections are available at additional cost. For select sailings, a pre-cruise hotel may be required, depending on flight allocation. If so, this will be available at an additional supplement. Additional Terms and Conditions may apply. Complete Terms and Conditions may be found at OceaniaCruises.com or in the Guest Ticket Contract. Ships' Registry: Marshall Islands 00180101373UK.

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Your Business

15 PAGES
OF INTERVIEWS,
SALES INCENTIVES
AND CAREER
INSPIRATION



Celebrity Agent
Appreciation Awards
2018

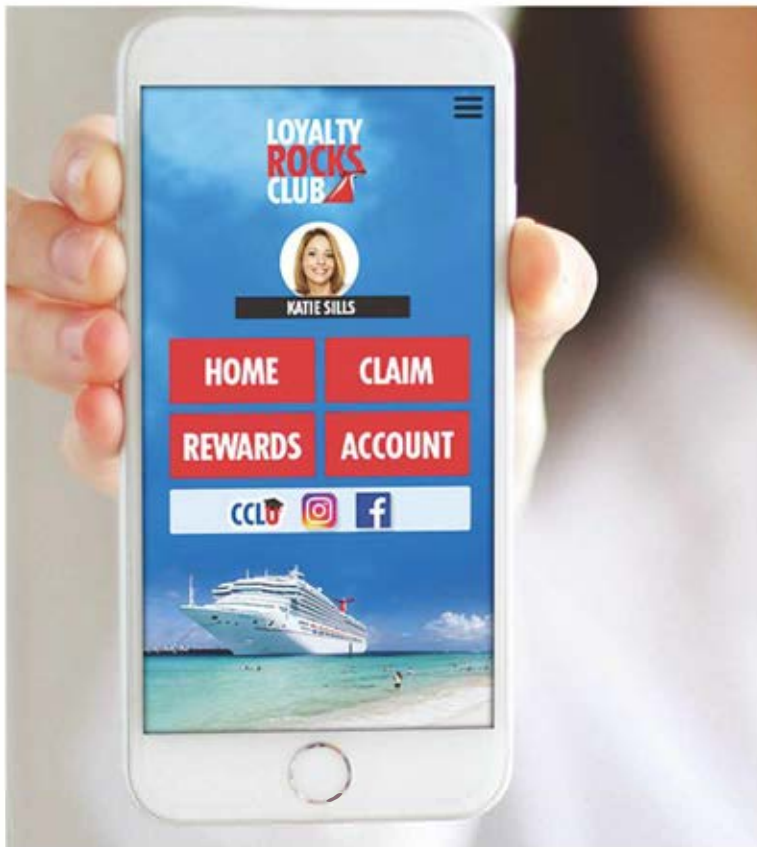
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What's in it for you?

CMV's top ten

CMV's 10-prize incentive runs until the end of February, so move quickly if you want to be included among the names eligible for some rather impressive trips, food, entertainment, technology and more. Prizes available to agents for bookings made during this month include a fam trip cruise to the Norwegian Fjords (right) in April, cinema vouchers, a three-course meal for two at one of Jamie Oliver's Italian restaurants and a new Amazon Echo. CMV's head of trade sales, Lisa Jacobs, said: "Agents should let us know when making a booking. We just need your name, ABTA number and the booking reference." Agents' names will be drawn out of a hat at the end of February.

competitions@cruiseandmaritime.com



A rocking new app

Carnival Cruise Line Loyalty Rocks Club has launched a new app to help agents keep up to speed with rewards and news. The first 230 agents to download the Loyalty Rocks Club app will win prizes ranging from £5 to £1,000 as well as cruises. The app will also work as a communications tool for the UK travel trade, enabling guests to keep up to date with Carnival news. Previously only available on desktop, Carnival's Loyalty Rocks Club app will make it easier to keep up with rewards, treats, online training, incentives and more.

loyaltyrocksclub.redpoints.co.uk

A beautiful incentive

Here's another incentive that's well worth following up, but that isn't going to be around for much longer. Running until the end of February, thanks to Silversea, agents can bag a chance of winning a Jo Malone gift set valued at £217. "We are thrilled to continue rewarding and recognising our hardworking agents through the Silversea Advocates Programme in 2018," said Connie Georgiou, Silversea's sales director, UK & Ireland. Ten winning agents will be chosen from a shortlist provided by Silversea's regional sales managers, with each putting forward agents based on their sales performances. In addition, selected agents will also have the chance to experience luxury cruise line Silversea for themselves on a VIP fam trip at the beginning of 2019.



For more information, speak to your regional sales manager

OFFER



Training with a twist

Thirty training places are up for grabs, courtesy of Carnival. The day will include key product training and news updates and will be led by Luke Smith, head of international sales, and Lucy Zvinakevicius, sales operations supervisor for international sales. Agents will also have the chance to take part in a three-hour cookery class during which they will work in teams to produce Asian dishes, competing head-to-head. Teams will have a chance to eat what they've created, with the winners receiving a bottle of prosecco. Taking place at the Radisson Blu Edwardian Mercer Hotel in London from 9.30am to 1pm, the class is one of Carnival's agent rewards being rolled out on 21 March.

To sign up, visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CCLUTrainingDay-March>

Win a festive cruise

Viking Cruises' sales managers in the north and south are currently distributing scratchcards to agents and at roadshows, with some great prizes up for grabs. The biggest prize is a Christmas cruise for two, though entrants can win anything from lunch on one of Viking's ocean ships when in the UK to a £25 Love to Shop voucher, a cuddly Erik the Viking, a bottle of prosecco, cookbooks and more. Agents simply need to scratch out the silver panel to see if they've won anything. The competition expires on 31st March 2018. One prize per scratch card.



madefortrade.co.uk

The luxury of small ship sailing



Iain Powell, head of trade sales for Saga Cruises, updates us on Spirit of Discovery and discusses the advantages of strong agent partnerships

We are very fortunate to have customers, both new and existing, who book their cruise with us well in advance. This has put us in a strong position heading into 2018 and I am very positive about the year ahead. Our agent partners are a key part of our strong performance and we are extremely grateful for this. We do still have availability remaining and I would urge customers to book now to avoid disappointment.

Spirit of Discovery is progressing very well indeed. We are all extremely excited to welcome her into the fleet in summer 2019. Saga Cruises is, I feel, entering a new era with Spirit of Discovery, and then Spirit of Adventure, which follows in 2020. Spirit of Discovery will be the definition of luxury

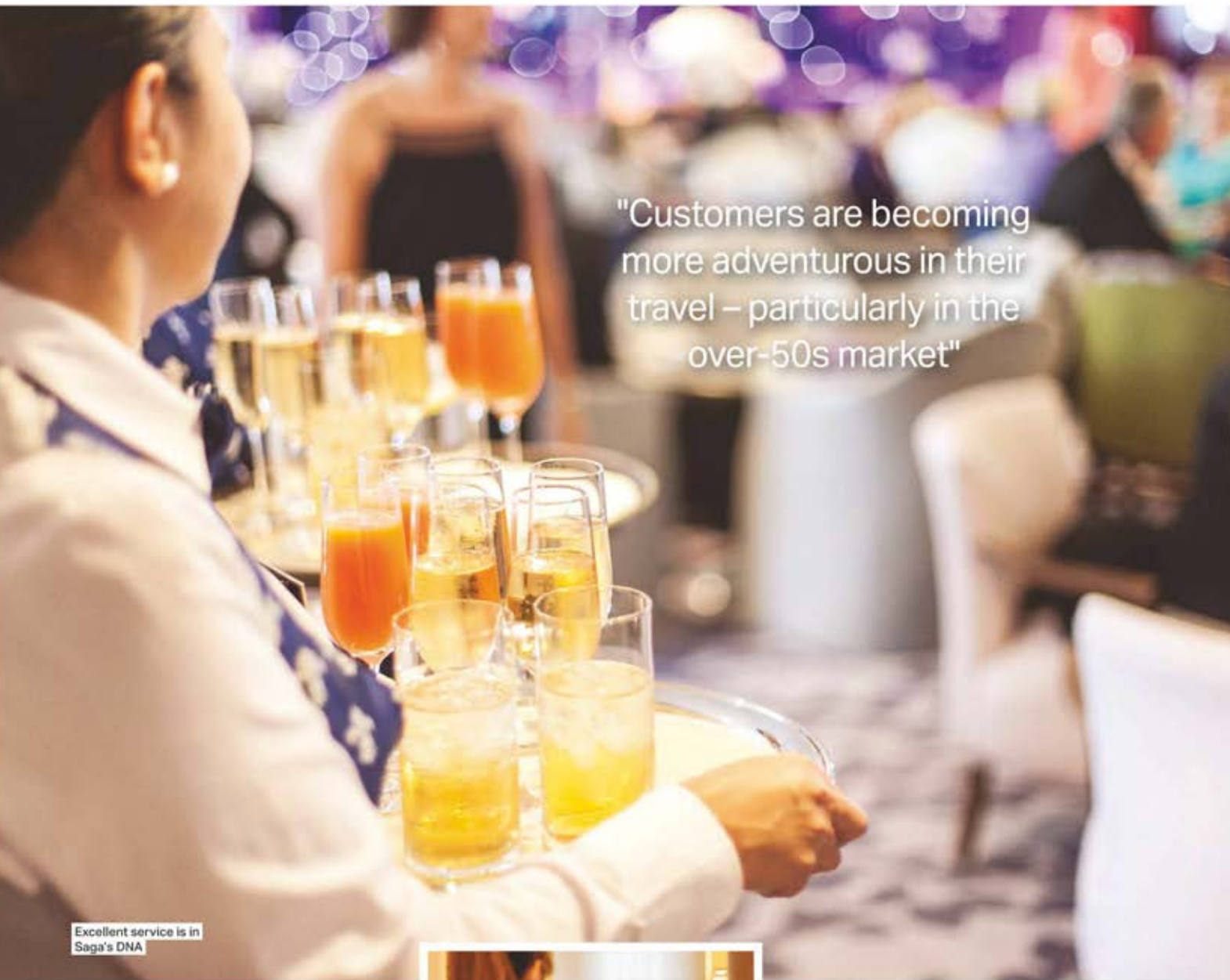
small ship cruising, with the styling of a luxury boutique hotel. Every cabin will benefit from a private balcony and an abundance of space. Customers will have an array of restaurants and bars to choose from, while enjoying the comfort of Saga's outstanding service levels.

I've been overwhelmed by the positivity towards our brands from the trade and I hope we can continue to build on this. Agent partnerships are incredibly important to us – travel agents are such an integral part of the customer's journey. We rely on them to showcase the Saga product, whether it be a cruise or land-based holiday. I was recently brought into Saga to further develop our trade relationships, which is testament to the

businesses' commitment to growing this channel.

We are always looking for new ways to reward agents for booking a Saga product and offer a wide range of agent training and incentive opportunities. For example, we are giving £100 vouchers on every ocean cruise booking made by the end of February 2018. You are also entered into a draw for Ed Sheeran tickets. We also have an amazing regional team who can support with training and events; if we can be of any help, just let us know.

Cruise continues to grow and is becoming a key part of the travel industry, but we still have a long way to go. I think customers are becoming more



"Customers are becoming more adventurous in their travel – particularly in the over-50s market"

Excellent service is in Saga's DNA

adventurous in their travel – particularly in the over-50s market. Because of this, they want new and exciting destinations to explore, which are often only accessible on smaller ships. Saga continues to operate and build smaller luxury ships, exploring varied and diverse ports of call.

Service is at the heart of everything we do and I feel our level of inclusions is industry-leading. I would like to see our agent partners articulate the incredible value for money Saga offers. Whether it is our full-board basis, drinks with lunch and dinner, chauffeur service door-to-door from up to 250 miles or inclusive gratuities, we offer real value. Also, for 2018 sailings we have made Saga Sapphire All Inclusive; we've got everything covered.



Staff are always on hand to assist

I am at present primarily focusing on continuing our strong start to Wave/Peak. As I only recently joined Saga, this is also a period of reflection for me – a time when I can assess the various ways in which we can further support our agent partners. In the coming weeks and months, therefore, we will be cementing existing relationships with our partners while also seeking new ones. My team of both office and field sales people will be there to help in any way we can, garnering the incredible trade support for the brands, which is clear to see. Both Saga Holidays and Cruise have an amazing product offering of diverse and varied experiences; I will look to the trade to support us in showcasing this to customers. ●

You'll love our February incentives

To celebrate Valentine's month, don't miss your chance to see Ed Sheeran woo the crowds at one of his sought-after 2018 dates. Every ocean cruise you book could win you tickets in our exciting free prize draw.

Or why not make a date with Saga by joining one of our tempting ship visits in Dover or Southampton, complete with an enticing meal aboard Saga Sapphire. We'd love to treat you to a wonderful time – just call or visit our website for details.



ABTA
W8164 / W8179

To claim your shopping vouchers and receive automatic entry into the draw for Ed Sheeran tickets, email incentives@saga.co.uk with booking details. Applicable to bookings confirmed by February 28, 2018. For full terms visit saga.co.uk/agents. *Fares are per person based on two people sharing an Inside Guarantee cabin where you will not be given your cabin number at time of booking but at embarkation, aboard Saga Sapphire's Flavours of Amsterdam, departing November 9 2018. *Save up to £2000 per person on 2018 cruises when booked by February 18 2018. Terms and conditions apply. Saga holidays are for anyone aged 50+. A travel companion may be 40+. NHA-SC8531

An aerial photograph of a large cruise ship sailing through a deep, narrow fjord. The water is a vibrant turquoise color, and the surrounding mountains are steep and covered in green vegetation. A small town is visible on the shoreline in the foreground.

£100

in shopping vouchers
for every ocean
cruise booked

**Ed Sheeran
tickets**

prize draw entry
with every ocean
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Sail all inclusive from just

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per person

Up to

£2000

per person
off selected cruises†

2018 ship visits

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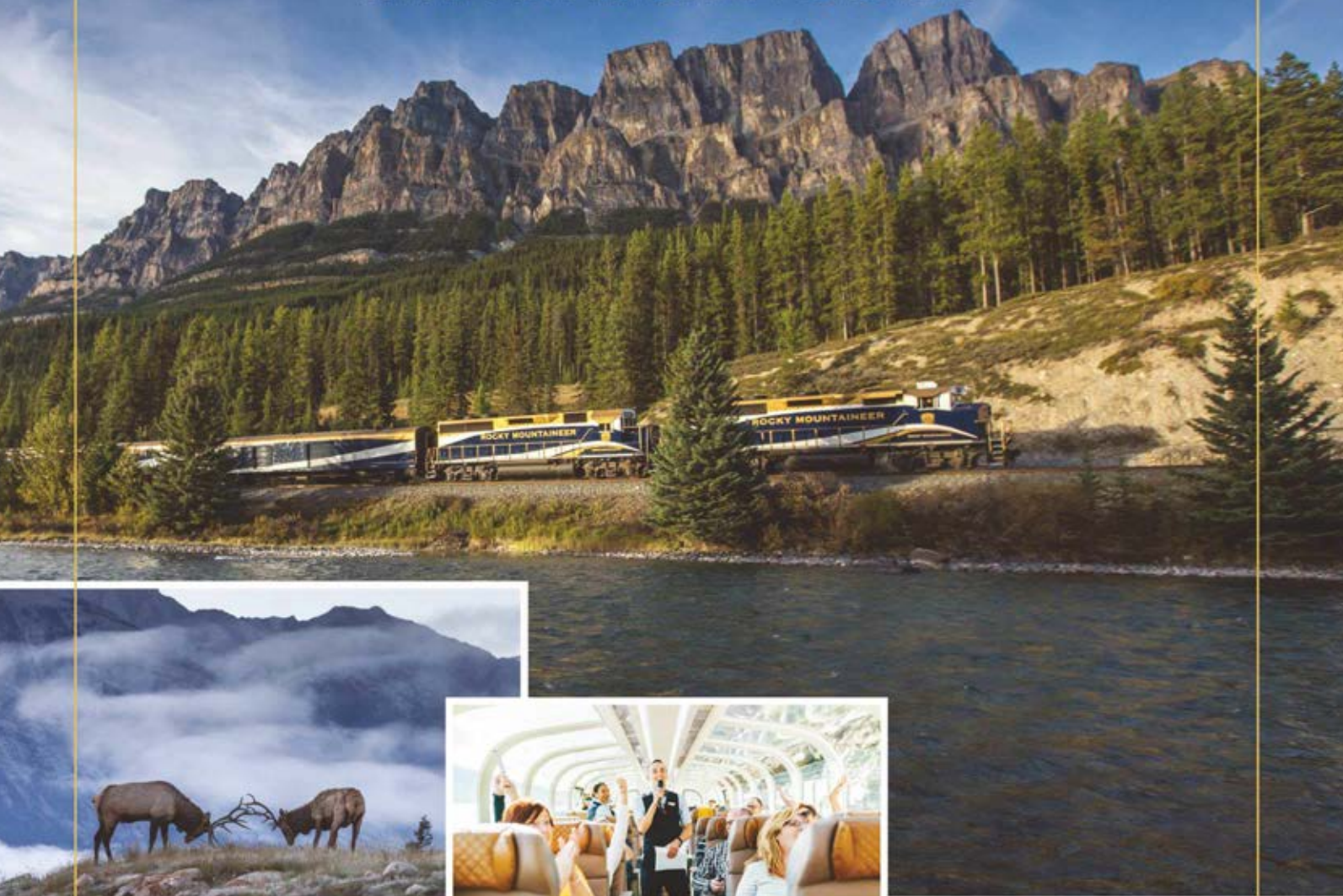
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ALL ABOARD AMAZING

Celebrity Travel Agent Appreciation Awards 2018



Celebrity Cruises sure knows how to nail a party. And despite the bleak January views from the 42nd floor of London's Leadenhall Building, a great time was had by all at the fourth Travel Agent Appreciation Awards.

Over 40 trade partners were in attendance and awards were presented to celebrate travel agents' and trade partners' achievements and commitment to

Celebrity Cruises over the last year.

Following a drinks reception that included candyfloss cocktails and entertaining EDGE performers, the awards were hosted by president and CEO, Lisa Lutoff-Perlo; Dondra Ritzenthaler, senior vice president, sales, trade support and services; and Jo Rzymowska, vice president and managing director for the UK & Ireland and Asia. ➤



Candyfloss cocktails



Cruise Trade News editor
Rebecca with Travel Bulletin's
Adam Potter

Cele



Just hanging around...



The winners take to the stage



Lisa Lutoff-Perlo updates
guests on the latest news



A round of applause
for the winners



Q&A

SIMONNE FAIRBANKS

Chief operating officer,
cruisingexcursions.com



HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED IN YOUR CURRENT JOB AND WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO THE ROLE?

I've been with cruisingexcursions.com since start-up in 2011. I took a risk as the concept of selling excursions online, independent of the cruise line, was virtually non-existent then – but it was such an innovative model I couldn't resist! Our innovation has been in securing and building an overseas infrastructure, strong supplier relationships, and a wealth of tour guides with multilingual product range, all wrapped up in a real price value proposition. We started with just 240 European excursions at 60 Med ports. This year we are up to around 12,000 excursions at more than 700 ports worldwide. Contracting is my area of expertise, so I've been very busy!

WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT THE CRUISE INDUSTRY?

What isn't there to like! I now wouldn't want to work in any other travel area – there is something new to discover every day. The growth in the cruise industry shows no sign of abating and it's an upbeat, exciting environment to work in. I particularly like working with the cruise specialist travel agents – they're so passionate and enthusiastic about all things cruising and I never fail to be impressed by their knowledge.

WHAT MAKES CRUISINGEXCURSIONS.COM DIFFERENT?

We are the UK's leading independent shore excursion provider; we try and offer a good range of excursions at an affordable price. We have transparent



pricing – booking through an agent or direct the price is the same – and we look after agents and pay great commission!

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO MOST OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?

We have to keep on our toes – since 2001 nine or more new cruise ships have been built every year and 2018 is no exception. We are constantly expanding and tweaking our product range. In the next year or so I'm looking forward to expanding our portfolio of shore excursions at ports of call in the Asia Pacific region.

HOW DO YOU WORK WITH THE TRADE?

Agents embraced our commissionable

products and now 99 per cent of UK agents are signed up to sell the excursions, with an average sale price of £300pp – giving around £48pp in valuable commission! For some companies we produce hard copy brochures and we can also offer white label websites. As well as commission we have a generous agents' loyalty reward scheme – Port Points – with bookings earning points that can be redeemed for gifts. We also regularly run agent incentives and have a dedicated agent training manager.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR TYPICAL CUSTOMER?

Our typical customer is getting younger as cruise ships adapt their features to attract new generations, and cruising has become more affordable as competition grows; value-savvy cruisers like to have the time to browse and compare excursions at leisure before buying. Many of our customers know exactly what they want because they are repeat cruisers; they are experts. Then we have the enthusiastic first-time cruisers, who like to gather as much information as possible so they have a great experience on their first cruise.

IF AGENTS SELL ONLY ONE EXCURSION THIS YEAR WHAT SHOULD IT BE?

I would highly recommend the St Petersburg tours. Nobody can walk off ship and do their own thing at this port; you have to reserve a tour with either the cruise line or an independent company, such as Cruising Excursions. The destination is absolutely breathtaking and not to be missed!

TOP THREE TIPS FOR AGENTS SELLING EXCURSIONS

1 Follow up with your customers prior to their cruise, research excursions to suggest and give tailor-made service with ideas for each port.

2 If you've booked a first-time cruiser keep it simple and traditional. A repeat cruiser may be ready for something a bit different, especially if they've been to the destination before.

3 If you're going on a cruise fam trip, test a few excursions out yourself so you know what you're selling – we offer complimentary excursions to agents.



WIN £500.* MEET THE STARS OF LOVE ISLAND.

Here's what your customers get if they book an eligible Ocean View stateroom or above before 15 March 2018, on selected 2018–19 European sailings:

- 2nd guest pays just half their cruise fare
- Free Classic Drinks Package for two
- Additional guests get 50% off cruise fare

Our top 100 sellers will win £500 worth of Celebrity Rewards points, what's more the stars of Love Island could be delivering the prize in person! Plus with our 'LOTS OF LOVE' spot prize competition we have an extra 3,500 prizes to give away, including a Caribbean cruise with free flights.

DEC 2017 – MAR 2018

WIN YOUR
CELEBRITY
MOMENT



GET BOOKING! VISIT CRUISINGPOWER.CO.UK FOR MORE INFO

Celebrity Silhouette

From spring 2018, Celebrity Silhouette will be based in Southampton. That's incredible news to share with your customers as she's the ultimate Solstice Class ship with all the best features



THE LAWN CLUB GRILL

The industry's first outdoor, interactive grill restaurant located on The Lawn Club. By day guests can take part in cookery demonstrations. By night they can join a Celebrity Cruises Chef and become a 'Grill Master'.



THE ALCOVES

Positioned around the Lawn Club, the Alcoves are eight semi-private, shaded cabanas that can accommodate two to four guests. They offer plush seating, themed picnic baskets, WiFi, and an à la carte beverage menu.



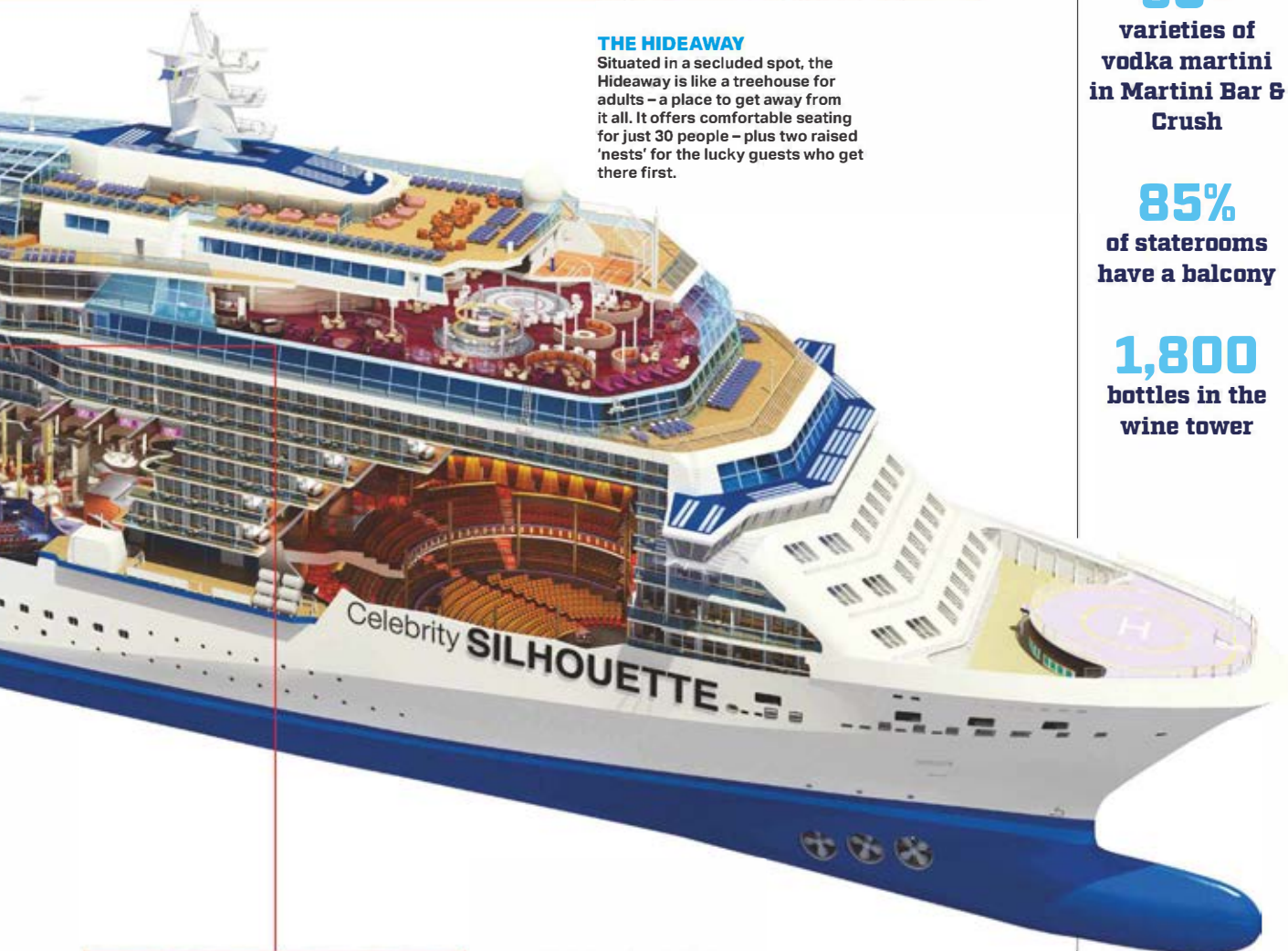
THE PORCH

Located at the entrance to the Lawn Club, The Porch specialty restaurant offers stunning views of the lawn and the sea. This intimate, 48-seat venue is the perfect place to enjoy fresh seafood dishes, in addition to specialty cocktails, coffee, beer and wine.



THE HIDEAWAY

Situated in a secluded spot, the Hideaway is like a treehouse for adults – a place to get away from it all. It offers comfortable seating for just 30 people – plus two raised ‘nests’ for the lucky guests who get there first.



MARTINI BAR & CRUSH

Celebrity Cruises is famed for its firsts in the cruise industry. Martini Bar & Crush is the first ice-topped bar at sea, with a vast menu of contemporary and classic martinis, matched with a portfolio of fine caviars.

FAST FACTS

12
restaurants and
eateries

50+
varieties of
vodka martini
in Martini Bar &
Crush

85%
of staterooms
have a balcony

1,800
bottles in the
wine tower

RECOMMENDED ITINERARIES TO HELP BOOST YOUR BOOKINGS.

Celebrity **X** Cruises®
SAIL BEYOND BORDERS

From the best of the Med to Norway's stunning fjords, Celebrity Silhouette® will take your customers to some of Europe's ultimate must-see destinations. Here are our top 6 recommendations for you to share with them. **And don't forget – our new offer applies to all of these sailings when you book an Ocean View stateroom or above.**



7NT NORWEGIAN FJORDS 30 April 2018

Sail from Southampton and visit Bergen, Ålesund, Geiranger and Stavanger

PLUS FREE DRINKS FOR TWO!

OCEAN VIEW
FROM
£1,429^{PP*}

Price shown inclusive
2nd guest saving



13NT CANARY ISLANDS 21 October 2018

Sail from Southampton and visit Vigo, Lisbon, Lanzarote, Gran Canaria, Tenerife, Madeira (Funchal), La Coruna and Bilbao

PLUS FREE DRINKS FOR TWO!

OCEAN VIEW
FROM
£1,959^{PP*}

Price shown inclusive
2nd guest saving



14NT WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN 9 September 2018

Sail from Southampton and visit Gibraltar, Provence (Toulon), Florence/Pisa (Livorno), Rome (Civitavecchia), Ajaccio, Barcelona and Lisbon

PLUS FREE DRINKS FOR TWO!

OCEAN VIEW
FROM
£2,109^{PP*}

Price shown inclusive
2nd guest saving



12NT SCANDINAVIA & RUSSIA 7 May 2018

Sail from Southampton and visit Kristiansand, Copenhagen, Tallinn, St. Petersburg (overnight), Helsinki and Skagen

PLUS FREE DRINKS FOR TWO!

BALCONY
FROM
£1,959^{PP*}

Price shown inclusive
2nd guest saving



14NT SCANDINAVIA & RUSSIA 7 July 2018

Sail from Southampton and visit Bruges (Zeebrugge), Copenhagen, Nynashamn, Tallinn, St. Petersburg (overnight x2) and Berlin (Rostock)

UPGRADE TO RECEIVE FREE DRINKS FOR TWO!

INTERIOR
FROM
£1,419^{PP*}

Price shown inclusive
2nd guest saving



14NT CANARIES & AZORES 23 September 2018

Sail from Southampton and visit Ponta Delgada, Madeira (Funchal), Tenerife, Gran Canaria, Fuerteventura, Lanzarote and Lisbon

PLUS FREE DRINKS FOR TWO!

OCEAN VIEW
FROM
£2,139^{PP*}

Price shown inclusive
2nd guest saving

CRUISINGPOWER.CO.UK

Terms and conditions: Prices are correct at 23/01/18. Prices are 'from' per person based on two adults sharing the lowest grade Ocean View stateroom, unless indicated otherwise. Fly/Cruise packages are based on flights from the airport specified. Prices exclude gratuities. Prices are subject to increase at any time. All offers are subject to availability. *Promotion applies to new bookings made between 14 December 2017 – 15 March 2018 on selected sailings departing from April 2018 to April 2019. Offer applies to eligible Ocean View staterooms and above only. Interior staterooms and guarantee staterooms in guarantee classes Z, Y, X, XC, XA and W are not applicable to the promotion. The first two adults per stateroom will receive a Classic Alcoholic Drinks Package. Where the second guest in a stateroom is less than 18 years of age on the initial sailing date (21 years of age for North America departures), a Classic Non-Alcoholic Drinks Package will be provided instead. Please drink responsibly. Additionally, for selected European and Abu Dhabi sailings, the second guest on any eligible booking occupying the same stateroom as a full paying guest shall receive a saving of 50% off the full price of the cruise fare only. The Cruise Fare refers to Cruise Fare and Taxes & Fees only. Other add-ons including, but not limited to, Gratuities, Air fares, Hotels and Transfers are not included and will not be reduced as part of the promotion. Prices above already include the saving for the second guest. Additional 3rd, 4th or 5th guests occupying the same stateroom will each receive a saving of 50% off their cruise aspect of their booking. Further terms and conditions apply, please ask for details.

The cruise cognoscenti

Want to know who the powerful personalities behind your go-to cruise lines are – and, more importantly, their plans for 2018? Look no further...



The agent advocate

Jo Rzymowska, vice president & managing director UK & Ireland and Asia, Celebrity Cruises

Jo Rzymowska's career in the travel industry began as an overseas resort representative for Intasun Holidays. From there she was hooked and has not looked back. Jo joined RCL Cruises Ltd in January 2005 as sales and marketing director, UK and Ireland, moving up to be associate vice-president and general manager. She led the development of teams for each of the business's three cruise brands and in January 2014 took the helm as the first managing director for Celebrity Cruises, UK & Ireland – as well as Asia.

"I can't overplay how huge 2018 is for Celebrity Cruises. Firstly, we'll be building the already high levels of excitement with new reveals for Celebrity Edge ahead of its launch at the end of the year. We also have Celebrity Silhouette's first season from Southampton and Celebrity Eclipse sailing from Dublin, so it's a really big year for the UK and Ireland market. We'll also continue to work hard with trade partners, growing understanding of the brand, and helping agents to sell to the Celebrity Cruises luxury-lover target market."

The new brand ambassador

Chris Hackney, managing director, Marella Cruises

Chris Hackney has worked for TUI UK for the last 17 years. He joined the cruise division in September 2015 and during this time has led the commercial team in key activity around yield management, planning, ancillary and on-board revenues, cruise procurement and key supplier management, before moving into his new role as MD of newly rebranded Marella Cruises in December.

"Three main focus areas for 2018 are key to establishing the new brand name as offering the same great itineraries, amazing destinations and friendliest service at sea. The first is the launch of our largest ship, Marella Explorer – it's an exciting time launching a ship and there are many new things, such as the first Champneys Spa at sea. The second is establishing the Marella name – a huge change which is a great opportunity to attract new customers who wouldn't have considered us before. The third is Marella Cruises' first foray into Asia with Marella Discovery at the end of the year."





The sales supremo

Steve Williams, director of sales, MSC Cruises UK & Ireland

Steve Williams started his career in travel 30 years ago as a Lunn Poly YTS in his home town of Alton, Hampshire. He spent 15 years in various roles within retail travel, which gave him a great understanding of the industry and increased his passion for travel. He made the move to account management, working first for Unijet Flights & Suncars before working for RCL Cruises, where he became head of sales for the Royal Caribbean brand. In the summer of 2016 an opportunity arose to step into a new role as director of sales for MSC Cruises.

"In 2017 we trained 2,500 agents on the MSC product and this is where our focus will stay for 2018. In addition, we have set up an extensive ship visit programme, which will run across the UK and Ireland and give over 2,000 agents the opportunity to experience one of our ships. Not forgetting that we will also be launching MSC Masters to the UK & Ireland trade in Q1, which will be our online training portal, as well as launching another fabulous ship, MSC Seaview in June. Plenty to keep us busy!"

The river innovators

Rudi Schreiner, president & founder, AmaWaterways and Kristin Karst, executive vice president & co-founder, AmaWaterways

Rudi Schreiner was born in Vienna, at the heart of the Danube. When the Rhine-Main-Danube canal was built in 1992, Rudi realised the potential for touring by river. He started the North American operations for many of today's river cruise companies, and after years as a driving force in the industry decided to start his own venture – one that would provide guests with a higher standard of luxury travel. Kristin Karst was born in Germany and brings extensive experience in travel, river cruising and customer service to the company. She consistently promotes her belief in building strong personal relationships and providing exceptional customer service.

"2018 early bookings from the US and Canada have been very strong, with a marked rebound in demand for cruises in France. Our international markets, specifically the UK and Latin America, are showing good growth. We are also very encouraged by the influx of requests for groups, charters and part-charters for 2019."

"The rapid growth in river cruising is reflected both in the diversity of ships and the profile of guests. We have noticed a few trends – most noticeably the increase in the number of younger, more active travellers. Bicycle tourism continues to grow in popularity and we are now able to offer three or four guided bike tours per week. In addition, we are seeing a category of traveller that is more health-conscious. We introduced our Wellness Programme on board AmaLyra last year, and in 2018 the programme will be added to five more ships."





The luxury purveyors

Roberto Martinoli, CEO, and Barbara Muckermann, CMO, Silversea

Roberto Martinoli is the CEO of Silversea, having been appointed in 2016. Before joining Silversea, Roberto was the chairman and CEO of Grandi Navi Veloci (GNV), a leading ferry company. Prior to this he was president and COO of Norwegian Cruise Line. Barbara Muckermann has been the CMO of Silversea since February 2017, having previously been Silversea's senior vice president of worldwide marketing and sales Europe from 2001-2005. Barbara played a pivotal role in the branding that presented Silversea as an intimate Italian cruise line through ambassador Isabella Rossellini and other partnerships.

"The strategy for 2018 is to continue to be at the forefront of ultra-luxury cruising around the world. Silversea will maintain the momentum of 2017 following the launch of Silver Cloud as an Expedition ship. This year will see Silversea provide guests with the chance to go deeper and discover the authentic beauty of the world with the Couture Collection, a series of curated pre- and post-cruise programmes. Itineraries encompass all seven continents and feature worldwide luxury cruises to hundreds of destinations, and in 2018 new ports of call will bring guests even closer to these far-flung regions."

The growth guru

Arnold W. Donald, president & chief executive officer, Carnival Corporation & PLC

A native of New Orleans, Arnold Donald is president & chief executive officer of Carnival Corporation & PLC, the largest travel and leisure company in the world. Traded on both the New York and London Stock Exchanges, Carnival Corporation is the only group of its kind in the world to be included in both the S&P 500 and the FTSE 100 indices. Arnold has been president and CEO of Carnival Corporation since July 2013.



"You will continue to hear us highlight the amazing value and standard of quality and service that cruising delivers and the joyful experiences we provide our guests. It sounds simple, I know, but only a small percentage of consumers have been on cruises, so there is a huge opportunity to engage them in the conversation about the joy of a cruise holiday. In reality, cruising has a very small market penetration into the larger vacation market, so there is ample opportunity to continue to grow this business in existing markets around the world."

The destination aficionado

Larry Pimentel, president and chief executive officer, Azamara Club Cruises

President and chief executive officer, Azamara Club Cruises, Larry Pimentel has been with the company since 2009. He lives in Miami.

"2018 will be a very exciting and successful year. Following unprecedented support from the UK for our new ship, Azamara Pursuit, we will be strengthening our UK ties even further this year as it continues to be a key market for us. In addition, we will be expanding our portfolio by 50 per cent, which will allow us to enhance our destination immersion offerings by visiting even more regions of the world. Within the first year of Pursuit's operation she will contribute a 40 per cent increase in destinations we offer our guests. This will contribute to strengthening our brand promise of staying longer and experiencing more."



The family man

Ben Bouldin, associate vice president and managing director, Royal Caribbean International UK & Ireland

In his first three years as director of sales, Ben Bouldin re-engineered the sales team and launched Royal Caribbean's industry-leading agent recognition programme, 'Club Rewards'. One of the industry's most dynamic leaders, Ben's insight, innovation and leadership has been integral to the growth of the UK market. He has successfully launched four new Royal Caribbean ships for the UK market in the past four years alone.

"2018 is such an exciting year for Royal Caribbean, as we will launch Symphony of the Seas in the spring, with the ship redefining family and adventure travel. May will also see the welcome return of Independence of the Seas back to the UK following a multi-million pound makeover. Families and new-to-cruise audiences remain a focus for us, as over the past few years the brand has been a major driving force of industry growth by attracting new, younger audiences. I believe there are three main triggers for why younger, new-to-cruise families are booking with us: the ability to visit multiple destinations while also being able to relax and experience fun and adventure along the way. In 2018 we are aiming to reach those audiences who, perhaps until now, haven't considered cruising and, in particular, the brand. As always, we continue to focus on growing our relationships with our amazing travel agent partners and we are really looking forward to delivering bigger and better incentives, competitions and surprises to agents this year."

WORDS: REBECCA BARNES



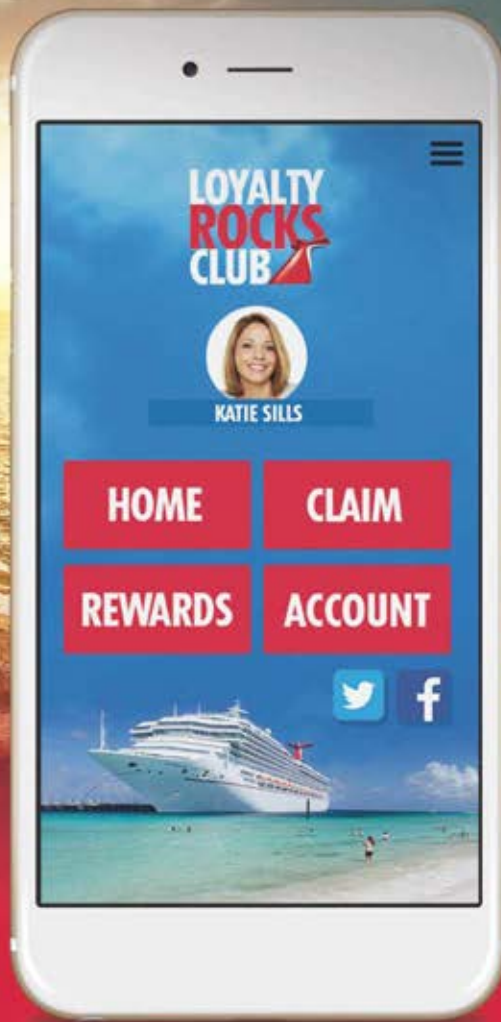
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**TRAVEL
AGENTS
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Terms & Conditions: Full Loyalty Rocks Terms and Conditions apply, these can be found on our website (www.loyaltyrocksclub.com). Carnival Cruise Line reserve the right to increase and decrease points awarded through the incentive scheme without notice at any time. The claim must be submitted by the end of each month in order for correct points to be allocated. Bookings submitted through Loyalty Rocks Club from 26th December 2017 until 28th February 2018 will earn 15 points per booking, which equals £15 per booking through the Loyalty Rocks Club scheme. The top twenty booking agents, claiming their bookings through Loyalty Rocks Club throughout this period (26th December 2017 until 28th February 2018) will have the chance to win one of twenty places in Ibiza this June. Carnival Cruise Line are giving agents the opportunity to win up to £1000/1000 points through Loyalty Rocks Club when they download the Loyalty Rocks Club App for the first time only. Travel Agents who download the Loyalty Rocks Club App can win one of 230 prizes instantly which could include any of the following prizes £5/5points, £10/10points, £50/50points, £200/200points, £500/500 points, £1000/1000 points through Loyalty Rocks Club plus cruise prizes.

Hanseatic Inspiration

With its maiden voyage in October 2019, Hapag-Lloyd's luxury expedition ship, Hanseatic Inspiration, will have the highest ice-class rating for passenger ships. Meanwhile, clever design features and innovations such as retractable glass balconies and the interactive Ocean Academy will ensure guests enjoy a premium expedition experience.



Your World

16 PAGES
OF MARKETABLE
ITINERARIES,
SHIP REVIEWS &
DESTINATION
INSPIRATION



Hapag-Lloyd sails
the Amazon

- 40 6 of the Best: Guest experience tech
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A close-up photograph of a blue robotic bartender arm, specifically a KUKA model, pouring a vibrant red liquid from a clear mixing cup into a small glass. The glass has the words 'BIO BAR' printed on it. The background is softly blurred, showing warm, bokeh-style lights, suggesting a festive or high-tech bar environment.

Robotic bartenders: for a perfectly mixed cocktail...

6 of the best...guest experience tech

1. Bionic bartenders

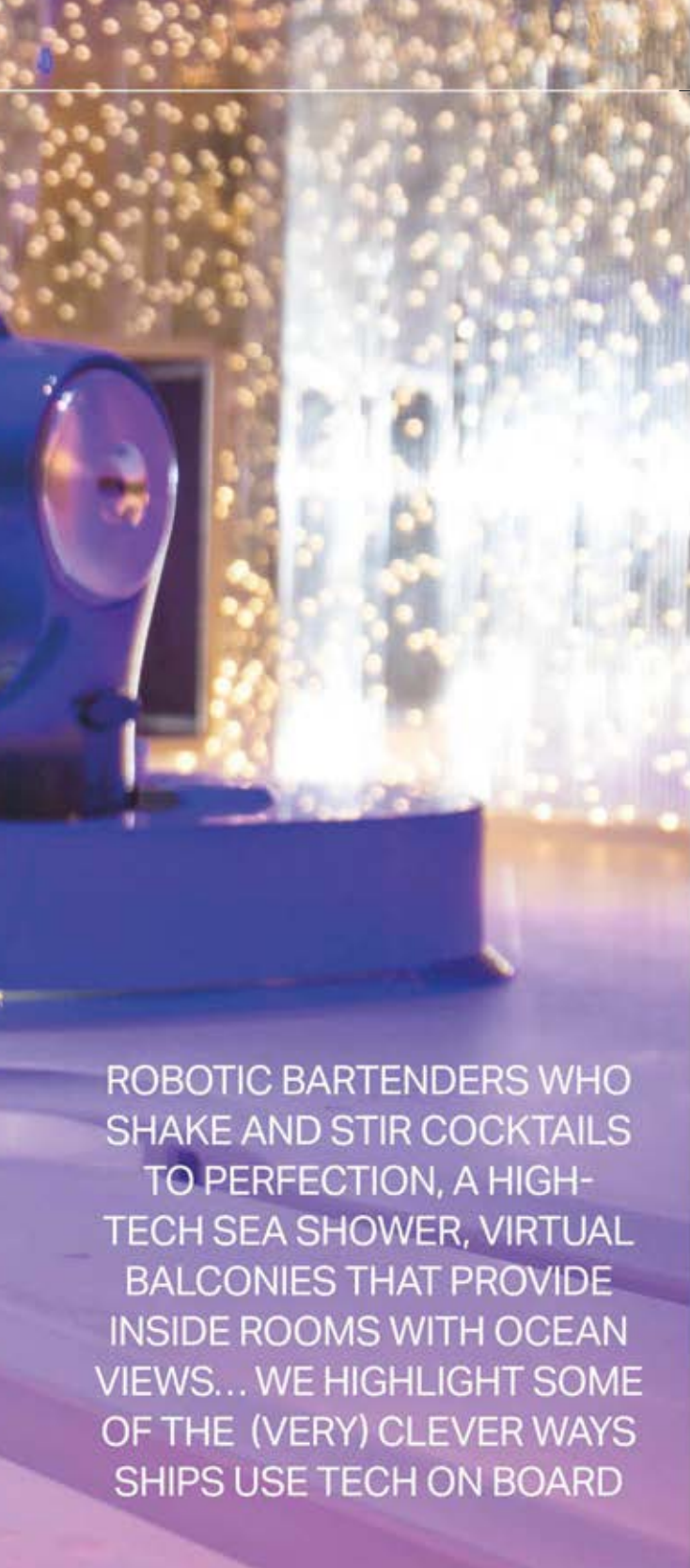
Everyone has heard of **Royal Caribbean's** bionic bartenders. These robotic barmen first appeared on Quantum of the Seas in 2014 and now feature on four ships, including Harmony of the Seas, Quantum of the Seas, Anthem of the Seas and Ovation of the Seas. The robotic bar staff, who even have names such as 'Shaken' and 'Stirred', can muddle, stir, shake and strain all types of drinks and combinations, with 30 spirits and 21 mixers to choose from.

Find it: royalcaribbean.com

2. Shower and shade

Is this the most high-tech way to perform your ablutions at sea? Guests staying in the Reflection Suite on board **Celebrity Cruises'** Celebrity Reflection have access to unrivalled views while enjoying the most indulgent shower on the ocean. It's an all-glass shower that extends over the side of the vessel, yet also hides users from passing ships thanks to the use of 'intelligent glass' – a material that responds to levels of sunlight and employs a one-way tint.

Find it: celebritycruises.co.uk

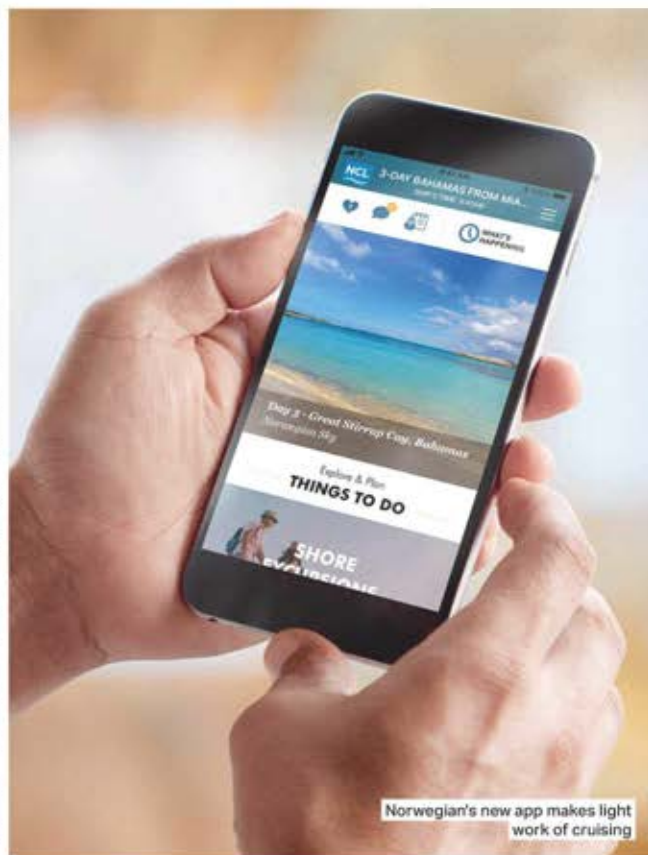


ROBOTIC BARTENDERS WHO SHAKE AND STIR COCKTAILS TO PERFECTION, A HIGH-TECH SEA SHOWER, VIRTUAL BALCONIES THAT PROVIDE INSIDE ROOMS WITH OCEAN VIEWS... WE HIGHLIGHT SOME OF THE (VERY) CLEVER WAYS SHIPS USE TECH ON BOARD

3. Tunnel technology

As one of the newest ships in the **MSC Cruises** fleet, *Meraviglia's* high-tech offering provides an immersive journey through a digital tunnel, enabling passengers to view excursion information and a screen show of their own trip. It's essentially a huge, enveloping passageway of videos and photos. Guests can interact with the walls, searching for pictures and videos of themselves taken by photographers, instead of manually trawling through the images.

Find it: mcscruises.co.uk



Norwegian's new app makes light work of cruising

4. Appy days

Designed to be the ideal travel companion from the day of booking to the day of disembarkation, **Norwegian Cruise Line's** new app helps guests stay connected with their friends and family as well as access on-board offerings, services and activities. Guests can, for example, preview and book shore excursions, make dinner reservations and purchase on-board packages. The app also provides directions to the port and mobile online check-in. It's available to Norwegian Sky guests and will be rolled out on Norwegian Bliss when it launches this summer.

Find it: ncl.com

5. Hospital on the high seas

Cunard's luxury liner *Queen Mary 2* runs transatlantic crossings from the UK to New York – a fabulous but lengthy voyage. As the ship is not always in helicopter range during these crossings, it requires a good dose of technology to ensure things run smoothly. This comes in the shape of a high-tech hospital complete with lab and X-ray machine. That's not the only health-conscious high-tech on board. The ship uses reverse osmosis to make seawater drinkable.

Find it: cunard.co.uk

6. Virtual views

Bringing an exterior view to interior staterooms by using large digital displays means that every one of the **373 interior** staterooms on **Royal Caribbean's** *Quantum of the Seas* has a balcony of sorts. A high-definition 80-inch screen is connected with a live camera to pick up audio and images outside the ship, meaning all passengers get the same sights and sounds as those with a balcony or ocean view. The technology is even said to combat motion sickness.

Find it: royalcaribbean.co.uk

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SHORE EXCURSION TIP

DOGSLEDDING & GLACIER FLIGHTSEEING HELICOPTER

Combine your helicopter flightseeing tour with Alaska's favourite sport, dog sledding. A short drive brings you to the heliport to start your adventure. Once airborne you'll soar over stunning glaciers and snow fields before landing at the Dog Camp on Denver Glacier. Here you'll become acquainted with the world of mushing and dog sledding. A truly authentic Alaskan adventure!

*Terms & Conditions: Up to \$500 on board credit per stateroom. Booking window is 7 December 2017 – 3 April 2018. On board credit amount based on category, is per stateroom, in U.S. Dollars, and will be applied to the 1st and 2nd guest in the stateroom. On board Credit has no cash value and is not transferable. It may not be used toward on board service charges or pre-purchased activities. Wi-Fi included in Premium All Inclusive is 60 minutes per stateroom. Offers are not applicable to categories IX, OX, BX, MX (Just Cruise Categories). Only applicable for 5+ night sailings. Offers are for New Individual FIT Reservations only. Offers are not applicable to group reservations. Offers and combinability with other promotional offers is subject to change at any time per Norwegian Cruise Line's discretion. Other restrictions may apply. On-board credit offer is per stateroom, based on stateroom category booked, in U.S. Dollars and will be applied to the 1st and 2nd guest on the reservation. Offer is only applicable for new individual FIT reservations. Subject to availability. Errors and omissions excepted. Terms and conditions of Norwegian Cruise Line apply. For full terms and conditions see www.ncl.co.uk. NCL (Bahamas) Ltd. | UK Office | 4th Floor | Mountbatten House | Southampton | SO15 2JU | U.K. ©2018 NCL Corporation Ltd. Ship's Registry: Bahamas and USA 6735.1.18

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May 6, 20 • June 3, 17 • July 1, 15, 29



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Haven Suite	£2,559 pp*	£3,444 pp*

*Price valid on 18 Feb 2018 dept. Visit ncl.co.uk for details.



FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

If you are planning a memorable holiday for the whole family, Norwegian Cruise Line is the perfect choice for grandparents and younger members of the family to enjoy quality time together. Our cruise holidays combine the right level of activities, culture and relaxation to appeal to everyone... it's also easy for you to enjoy quality time together with fun stuff like Aqua Parks, ropes courses and just chilling in the pool. Norwegian knows that families don't come in one size only, so you'll find accommodation is designed to be adaptable with space for everyone, while Freestyle Dining offers the most flexible family dining experience at sea.



Focus on: Vancouver

Ease of access – combined with world-class facilities and a range of destinations – makes Vancouver an ideal cruise port



Dubbed 'Manhattan with mountains' this sophisticated city, whose skyline is studded with elegant glass skyscrapers, is ideally situated for an exciting range of cruises, including sailings through the scenic string of fjords, mountains and glaciers along the Inside Passage route to Alaska from May to October, and select sailings to other North American ports during the rest of the year.

Fronted by the Pacific Ocean, backed by the mighty Coast Mountains and surrounded by stunning natural scenery, Vancouver is often classed as 'one of the world's most liveable cities', which means there are plenty of options for clients who want to extend their stay, too.

As an added bonus, cruise ships arriving at the ship-shaped Canada Place cruise terminal via the Lions Gate Bridge, arrive in the heart of this compact city's downtown area where most of the main attractions – including Gastown and the food-lovers paradise of Granville island – are situated.

Best for families

Why? Disney Wonder's round trip from Vancouver to Alaska allows families plenty

of quality time together to spot glaciers, whales and grizzly bears, while travelling with favourite Disney characters, enjoying themed activities and even eating with Mickey Mouse. What's more, there is a huge variety of activities to keep kids of all ages amused while the ship is at sea, and several nurseries to keep watch over the tots when parents need a break.

When? Families will prefer the summer months, when the weather is slightly warmer and it's easier to spot all that exotic wildlife.

Book? Disney Wonder has seven-night round-trip departures from Vancouver with stopovers at four ports, including the salmon capital of Ketchikan, and Juneau, which is famed for its gold mines.

Silversea also has seven-night departures from Vancouver, visiting five ports. The cruise ends in Seward, which is the departure point for a range of wildlife tours in the Kenai Fjords National Park.

Best for nature lovers

Why? With the company's vast experience in the region and its exciting range of shore excursions, **Princess Cruises'** seven night

Voyage of the Glaciers cruises out of Vancouver offer clients the ideal way to discover this thrilling region. Ships travel via the Inside Passage, giving passengers the chance to spot killer whales, northern sea lions, sea otters, porpoises and other exciting wildlife, while shore excursions on offer include exhilarating activities like dog sledding, kayaking and zip lining.

When? Alaska cruises operate between May and September, although there's more chance of spotting the local wildlife during the summer months.

Book? Princess Cruises have north and south-bound seven-night Voyage of the Glaciers cruises from Vancouver to Skagway via the Inside Passage, with stopovers at Ketchikan and Juneau.

Train-loving nature fans will enjoy **Rocky Mountaineer's** ultimate rail and cruise packages that combine five days' travel through the Canadian Rockies aboard the Rocky Mountaineer, with a pre- or post-tour Alaska cruise from Vancouver, calling at Juneau, Skagway and Ketchikan.

Best for exotic appeal

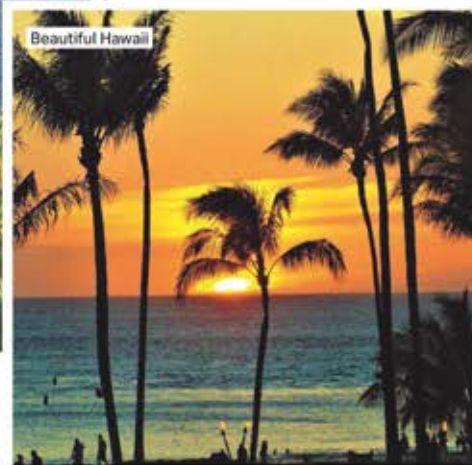
Why? Whether it's snorkelling from the



NEED TO KNOW

With its comprehensive transport system, combining harbour ferries, the light rail Sky Train and hop-on-hop-off buses, it's really easy to get around in Vancouver.

Vancouver is the closest home port to Alaska, which means that clients who depart from this port will spend less time en route and more time exploring those thrilling Alaskan waters.



pristine island of Lanai near Maui, hiking in lush rainforest or getting close-up views of mighty volcanoes on The Big Island, you can't get much more exotic than a multi-week trip to the beautiful islands of Hawaii aboard **Holland America's** recently refurbished *Westerdam*. One of the company's newer Vista-style Class vessels, delights on board include several new evening venues, an extensive contemporary art collection and food cookery demos at The Test Kitchen theatre.

Cruising is also an ideal way to explore some of the globe's most alluring islands, without having to plane hop between atolls.

When? Hawaii is warm all year round, but clients who want to avoid rain should travel between December and March, while clients seeking lower temperatures should look at dates from September to mid December, or mid-April to mid-June.

Book? Holland America Line's 17-night round-trip Hawaii cruise from Vancouver calls at five ports, including the nightlife and shopping paradise of Honolulu and Hilo, home of the renowned Wailuku River State Park.

Clients who prefer a shorter trip should

opt for **Carnival Cruise Line's** 11-night voyage calling at five ports, including Honolulu.

Best for culture vultures

Why? Foodies and culture vultures will have a treat on this Pacific Coastal cruise aboard **Celebrity Infinity**, where highlights include visiting the picturesque 1920s-era settlement of Astoria in Oregon, discovering Fisherman's wharf, Alcatraz and other iconic San Francisco sights, and ending in glorious sunny San Diego, renowned for its art galleries and fascinating museums.

When? Spring and autumn, when the weather is balmy and flowers are in full bloom, are the best seasons to cruise the Pacific Coast.

Book? Celebrity Cruises' seven-night Pacific Coastal cruise from Vancouver calls at five ports – including Monterey, renowned for sumptuous seafood restaurants and Cannery Row, immortalised by writer John Steinbeck – and ends in San Diego.

Norwegian Cruises' shorter five-day trip from Vancouver calls at Victoria and Astoria, with the glitzy city of Los Angeles as the final destination. ⚓

SELL IT

PERFECT STOPOVER

With a range of hotels, such as the Fairmont's Pacific Rim overlooking the cruise harbour and the brand new, gold-tinged *Parq Vancouver* complex, Vancouver is ideal for a pre- or post-cruise stopover.

EASE OF ACCESS

Vancouver is one of the world's top airports and flights from around the world make it easy for clients to arrive here to start their cruise.

WORDS: HEIDI FULLER-LOVE

Finding Fantasia

With operators adding more choice in 2018 and beyond, there's never been a better time to take a South East Asian cruise



In line with the growing trend towards adventure and experiential holidays, South East Asia is popping up in more cruise itineraries.

The increasing coverage by cruise lines means it's now possible to travel in style from one point of interest to another in this awe-inspiring region.

In fact, some cruise options – such as river cruises along the Mekong or in Myanmar – mean cruise passengers visit some really remote areas that many backpackers don't get to reach.

Such is the growing attraction of South East Asia that mass-market operator TUI UK's recently renamed cruise operation **Marella Cruises** has added a 14-day voyage out of Malaysia as part of its winter 2018/19 programme, with charter flights into Langkawi.

The luxurious Strand
Cruise experience

SELLING TIPS

1

Holland America Line has early booking offers, including drinks packages and speciality dining, on Asian cruises as part of its Explore4 incentive programme.

2

Aqua Expeditions is offering discounts of 30% per booking on all Mekong sailings departing between 27 April and 14 August 2018.

3

The high standards and ease of access of a cruise holiday make it appealing to clients who may be worried about visiting this area because of fears over hygiene, safety and transportation.

4

Due to its size, CroisiEurope's new ship, RV Indochine II, is the only cruise ship that can dock in the heart of Ho Chi Minh City.

5

Must-visit locations such as Bangkok or Ho Chi Minh City are a long way from ocean cruise ports, so clients may prefer an itinerary that includes an overnight hotel stay.



Also expanding is **Holland America Line**, which has added new itineraries and destinations to its 2018/19 Asia cruise portfolio, with two mid-sized ships, **Westerdam** and **Maasdam**, in the region from October 2018 until April 2019. UK managing director Lynn Narraway said: "Having our Vista-class **Westerdam** in Asia means increased capacity over the 2017/18 season of more than 500 extra beds per cruise and five decks of balcony accommodation, including beautifully enhanced suites. "With a series of new enrichment opportunities for guests, **Westerdam** is the perfect way to explore Asia. "Furthermore, our intimate **Maasdam** will offer some incredibly immersive voyages." Meanwhile, **Fred. Olsen** sales and

marketing director Justin Stanton said: "Exotic cruises to colourful South East Asia always inspire the imagination of our guests and this wonderful itinerary gives them the chance to tick off lots of experiences from their 'must see' list."

Up close and personal

One of the best ways to see South East Asia is on inland waterways, and river cruise operators are also expanding their programmes.

Aqua Expeditions says 2018 will be Cambodia's year, while **Pandaw** has more options in Laos and **CroisiEurope** has added a fifth ship along the Mekong.

A spokesperson for **Aqua Expeditions** said: "This historically and culturally rich country has caught the eye of many an intrepid traveller over time, but has

been relatively out of the spotlight in the past, with Thailand and Vietnam stealing the show.

"Cambodia has been marked by many experts as the destination to travel to in 2018."

In September 2017, **CroisiEurope** added the 62-guest RV **Indochine II** to its Mekong programme. Its size and reduced draft allows it to cruise further than other ships on the Tonle Sap Lake, which is home to floating villages.

Pandaw, meanwhile, has a new ship, RV **Sabei Pandaw**, joining the river fleet in November 2018 and is expanding its ocean cruise, motor-yacht voyage around the Mergui Archipelago's 800 underexplored islands for 2018. Various departures are available until April 2018, and then from October onwards.

MAGICAL MALAYSIA

Malaysian ports Malacca, Penang, Langkawi and Port Kelang, as well as Phuket in Thailand, are included in a 20-night Indian Ocean Explorer on Holland America Line's 1,258-guest Masada. The Singapore round trip departs on 27 January 2019 after an overnight on-board stay and also takes in Sri Lanka and the Maldives. Fares from £2,499pp. hollandamerica.com

BRILLIANT BALI

Phuket is the finishing point for Silversea's 14-day semi-circumnavigation of Sumatra and Java on board Silver Discoverer, departing Bali, on 9 September 2018. Ports include Anak Krakatoa, Padang, Batu Islands, Suimeuli Islands, Sabang and Banda Aceh. From £5,670pp in an Explorer Suite, including excursions, expedition gear and Butler service. silversea.com

STAY ANOTHER DAY

Crystal Cruises is offering an 18-day Across the Bay of Bengal cruise from Singapore to Mumbai on Crystal Serenity, starting with an overnight in Singapore on 28 March 2018. The ship also overnights in Phuket, stays for two nights in Yangon, and visits Port Klang for Kuala Lumpur. All-inclusive cruise-only prices start at £5,520pp. crystalcruises.co.uk

FIT FOR A PRINCESS

A one-night pre-cruise hotel stay in Singapore is included in the price of Princess Cruises' 10-day tour taking in Kota Kinabalu in Malaysia, Nha Trang and Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam, and Bangkok and Ko Samui in Thailand. Prices start at £2,524pp including flights, transfers, main meals and an inside stateroom on Sapphire Princess. Princess.com/go



PICTURE PERFECT

The Strand Cruise, a luxurious river cruise experience combining the classic style of the Strand Hotel Yangon with state-of-the-art amenities, has added themed cruises on some of its three- and four-night itineraries between the cities of Bagan and Mandalay. A four-night photography cruise costs £1,383pp, with departures in March or September. thestrandcruise.com

CHRISTMAS IN PARADISE

Marella Cruises' 14-night Enchanting Far East 1 cruise on the all-inclusive ship Marella Discovery, sails from Langkawi, to Port Klang (for Kuala Lumpur), Penang, Singapore, Koh Samui, Laem Chabang (for Bangkok), Sihanoukville, Phu My (for Ho Chi Minh City), and Malacca. From £2,900pp, including flights from Birmingham, transfers, taxes and tips, on 20 December. tui.co.uk/cruise

HEAD TO HANOI

Pandaw is the only operator to offer the Halong Bay and Red River itinerary, exploring Northern Vietnam by traversing the Red River delta and its main tributaries, including the vibrant capital Hanoi. Prices on the 31-passenger RV Angkor Pandaw start from £2,167pp for 10 nights, including full board, local drinks, excursions, tips and transfers, but not flights. pandaw.com

NEW YEAR ADVENTURE

Fred. Olsen has a 30-night Australia and the Contrasts of Asia itinerary, on Black Watch, departing Brisbane on 5 January 2019, taking in several Australian ports including Darwin, then on to Komodo Island in Indonesia, Singapore, Phuket and India, before disembarking in Dubai. From £4,339 cruise only or £5,639 including flights. fredolsencruises.com

Register now for the 2018 Cruise Challenge!

The Agent Roadshow with a difference

Learn, play, win.

The Cruise Challenge returns in 2018 with even more dates and locations.

Go online and book your place now

www.thecruisechallenge.com

Locations in 2018:

6th March	Cardiff
15th March	Ipswich
20th March	Southampton
10th May	Manchester
17th May	Glasgow
21st June	Bedford
28th June	London
31st October	Newcastle
6th November	Liverpool
8th November	Tonbridge
TBC	Nottingham
15th November	Guildford



Agent feedback from 2017 Cruise challenges

"The sponsors' talks were very informative. The fun element, makes the Cruise Challenge completely different to any other event I have been to"

"I thought it was absolutely brilliant. Much better than other events I have been to. Well DONE!"



cruise
TRADE NEWS



The river where time stands still

When your seasoned river cruise clients request something a bit different, sell them the Elbe for a trip combining beauty and history in abundance

Elbe Princesse
soaks up the sunset
in Berlin

It may be one of Europe's least well-known waterways, but the Elbe provides the perfect opportunity for passengers to take in the big-hitting cities of Prague in the Czech Republic, Hamburg and Berlin.

Natural and unspoiled, the approximately 700-mile-long river provides plenty of easy-on-the-eye scenery, diverse landscapes, woodlands and wetlands which are home to a number of birds, fish and amphibian species.

"The Elbe is wonderful for a river cruise – it's relatively unspoilt with few locks or dams and very little freight traffic," says head of specialist product and innovation at **Saga Holidays**, Andy Iwasyszyn.

"A great time to visit is in the spring when it comes alive with wildlife. The banks are lined with many protected areas and nature reserves, so you see and hear wildlife you may not get to experience easily elsewhere – I've heard nightingales on two ➤

SALES TIPS

1

Clients should factor in time to explore two top cities at each end of their cruise.

2

This lesser-known, less-crowded river is ideal for a relaxed cruise.

3

The Elbe is ideal for clients who have already been on the Rhine and Danube.

4

CroisiEurope has developed special ships to navigate the low waters.

5

Excursion highlights include Dresden, Meissen and Wittenburg.

separate occasions while on the Elbe.

"Even in Dresden, one of the most underrated cities in Europe in my opinion, there are beautiful, meadow-like areas beside the river so you can easily get away from the city scene and take a walk along its banks."

Iwasyszyn particularly recommends the sweeping bends of the Bohemian hills just north of Prague that open up to the Sandstone mountain region – a unique and unusual rock formation rising from the banks of the river.

Carving a line from the North Sea to the Polish-Czech border, the Elbe is worth a visit most of the year but particularly at Christmas, when the villages and cities come alive with markets and festivities.

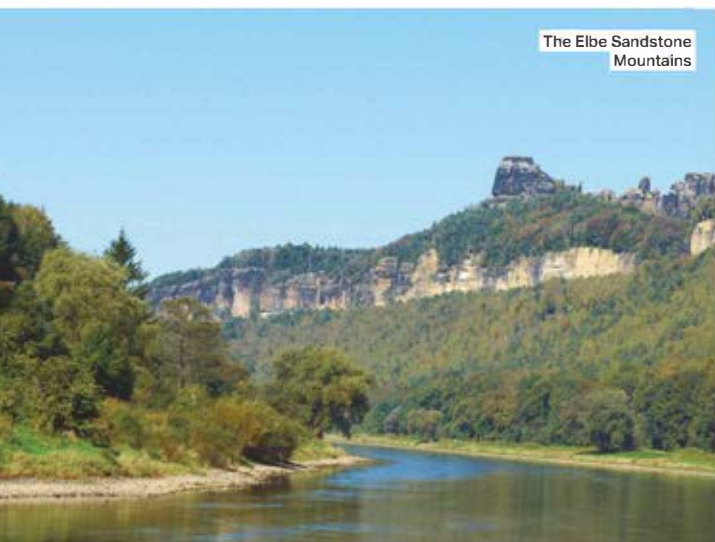
And if your client is into fine wine, they will enjoy this river; wine-producing areas include the 60km Saxon wine route, Melnik and Sachsen, which is Germany's easternmost

and smallest wine-growing region, situated in the upper Elbe Valley.

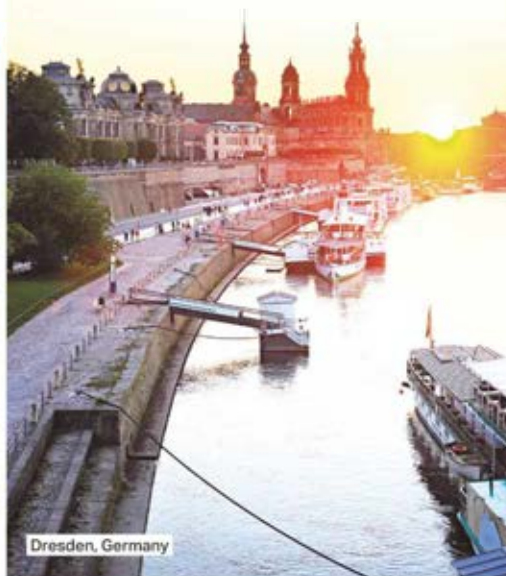
Because of its often low water levels, the Elbe can be difficult to navigate, which is why only a handful of ships with the right technology can sail on it. **CroisiEurope** is the main provider with Elbe Princesse and Elbe Princesse II. These vessels, with modern paddlewheel technology, have been designed to cope with the river's fluctuating levels.

Other operators offering Elbe cruises include **Titan**, **Fred. Olsen** and **Viking**.

"The Elbe is a unique and fascinating river stretching through former East Germany and the Czech Republic," says Neil Barclay, head of sales, Viking UK. "Viking has two mini-longships on the Elbe, both with only 98 guests, and our itinerary includes two nights at each end of the cruise in Prague or Berlin, so clients have lots of free time to discover the perfect twin-centre-city break on foot." ⚓



The Elbe Sandstone Mountains



Dresden, Germany



The Elbe Princesse is built to cope with the river's fluctuating water levels

SELL IT

CROISIEUROPE's nine-day cruise on **Elbe Princesse II** from Prague to Berlin on the Vltava and Elbe Rivers includes all the must-see sites, including the Elbe Sandstone Mountains, Dresden, Meissen, Potsdam and Berlin. Departing on 20 April 2018, prices start at £1,794pp for a double-occupancy cabin.

020 8328 1281.
croisieurope.co.uk

SAGA's From Berlin to the Kiel Canal seven-night itinerary sails the Elbe, Oder and German Waterways taking in Potsdam, Brandenburg, Havelberg, Hamburg and Rendsburg. Including flights from London Heathrow, Manchester or Bristol airports and return transfers. Departing on 31 May, prices start at £1,399pp.

0808 223 0504.
travel.saga.co.uk

VIKING's 10-day Elegant Elbe itinerary includes eight guided tours. Discover Berlin's modern chic, Potsdam's rococo whimsy and Prague's Gothic exuberance. Walk in Martin Luther's footsteps in Wittenberg, birthplace of the Protestant Reformation. Celebrate Dresden, a phoenix risen from the ashes of war, and view Saxon Switzerland's monoliths. Not forgetting the Elbe Biosphere Reserve. Departing on 9 November, the lead-in price starts at £2,595.

020 8780 7900.
vikingrivercruises.co.uk

French chic

CLIENTS CAN EXPERIENCE THE SOUTH OF FRANCE
IN STYLE ON THE ELEGANT AMADEUS PROVENCE



A stunning sight –
and the Rhone isn't
bad either

With a wow factor infinity pool and lido bar – the type of amenities you'd normally associate with ocean-going vessels – Amadeus River Cruises has raised the bar with the 14th vessel to join its fleet.

Carrying 140 passengers and measuring 360ft, Amadeus Provence might be smaller than the ships that ply the Rhine and Danube, but it punches above its weight with plenty of innovative features that you don't find on many larger vessels.

I joined the ship in Lyon, where it sails on a seven-night round-trip itinerary along

the Rhone and Saone rivers, from the vineyards of Burgundy to the lavender fields of Provence that are in full bloom during July and August.

The individually designed decor and colour scheme, masterminded by Martina Luftner from the family-owned line, is themed around the purple lavender fields, and her personal touches show elsewhere in splashes of contemporary art, beautiful fresh floral decorations and giant vases dotted around public areas.

Unlike the majority of other river lines that include excursions in the fare, Amadeus

bucks the trend with its adaptable à la carte shore tour programme. Three packages, ranging from a few trips dotted throughout the cruise to up to two per day, can be booked for clients in advance for a 15 per cent reduction on the on-board price. This didn't just help to keep fares down; I also appreciated the freedom of being able to pick and choose my excursions and explore some towns independently, or simply stay and relax on the large pool deck.

The 70 stylish cabins are spread over three decks and all feature walk-in wardrobes, a nice feature that you'd normally ▶

THE ITINERARY

LYON

Boasting one of the highest concentrations of restaurants in France, Lyon is the world's gastronomic capital. Amadeus Provence moors in the heart of the city, allowing passengers more than enough time to explore independently or join the walking tour, taking in highlights such as the landmark basilica and the charming old quarter.

MACON

Clients visiting this area, which nestles between the Maconnais and Beaujolais wine-producing regions in southern Burgundy, can join a panoramic morning tour through vineyards to the Georges Duboeuf Wine Museum followed by an all-important tasting. The afternoon brings a tour of Cluny Abbey, where the church was once the world's largest Christian building.

AVIGNON

Home to seven successive popes from 1309 to 1376, the UNESCO-listed Palace of the Popes is one of Europe's most important Gothic buildings and overlooks the four remaining arches of twelfth-century Saint Benezet Bridge. After lunch visit the picturesque ancient town of Uzès, perched on a hilltop.

ARLES

This is the gateway to the natural spectacle of the Camargue Regional Nature Park, home to white horses, pink flamingos and black bulls, and the delightful seaside town of Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer. The afternoon Arles city walk reveals the instantly recognisable Langlois Bridge painted by Vincent Van Gogh in 1888.

VIVIERS

The spectacular Ardeche Gorge, with its towering 1,000ft limestone cliffs, is dubbed "The Grand Canyon of Europe" and is the excursion highlight. The region is also famous for its lavender fields; passengers can stock up on gifts and souvenirs including fragrant flavoured sweets and olive oil.

only find in the suites on some other river ships, if at all. The standard cabins measure 188 square feet and have fixed windows on the lower deck and panoramic French balconies on the two upper decks. Thoughtful touches include soft-close drawers and bathrooms with plenty of storage space.

There are eight suites, all located on the top Mozart Deck, which measure 284 square feet and have a larger living area with a sofa, mini-bar and walk-out balcony.

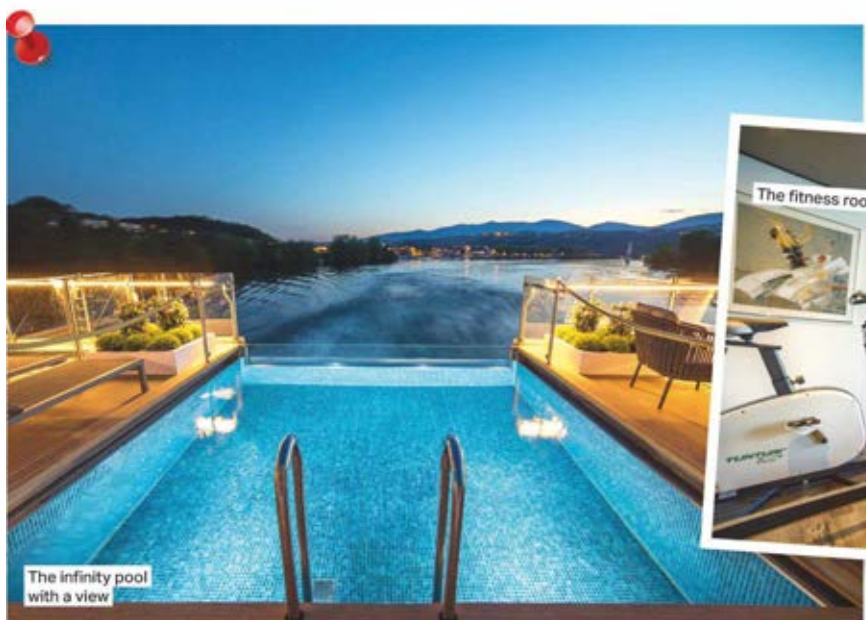
The main hub of the ship is the panoramic lounge and bar, with a mix of comfortable settees and chairs set around tables, and with enough seats for every passenger. At the back of the vessel is the Amadeus Club, a peaceful second lounge with a small library,

complimentary tea and coffee-making station and jars of freshly-baked biscuits.

Not that you're ever going to go hungry. Days start with early-bird pastries in the lounge before the Panorama Restaurant opens for a buffet and waiter-served breakfast, followed by a served lunch with a buffet salad bar and dinner.

Midday meals include a Provencal-themed buffet where waiters and waitresses dress up. Dinner is always five courses, with extra small dishes on the gala night. In addition, a light lunch is served in the lounge along with daily afternoon tea set against the backdrop of live piano music. The food throughout our cruise was imaginative and well-presented and always included a decent vegetarian choice and mouth-watering

"An area where Amadeus Provence differs from other lines is the seating set-up in the restaurant. Instead of open seating, which is usually the norm, passengers are allocated a table at the beginning of the cruise"



One of the elegant suites



The airy reception area

SELLING HIGHLIGHTS

- Infinity pool and lido bar on the sun deck.
- Walk-in wardrobes in every cabin.
- Flexible à la carte excursion programme.
- Five-course dinner each night and complimentary wine with meals.

BOOK IT

Seven-night Treasures of Burgundy & Provence cruise from £1,199pp, based on two people sharing a cabin, including all on-board meals, wines with lunch and dinner, flights and overseas transfers, as well as the option to travel by rail. There are special wine-themed itineraries departing 31 October, and 1 & 4 November 2018.

0800 035 6411
amadeus-rivercruises.co.uk

INCENTIVES

Claim a £10 Love2Shop voucher for every booking made before 28 February 2018. Each booking will also go into a draw to win a free cabin. Email agency.sales@fredrivercruises.co.uk with your booking reference number to claim.

Amadeus also has competitive rates for agents wishing to experience the line first-hand. Contact sales@fredrivercruises.co.uk

regional specialities such as vichyssoise, coq au vin and French chocolate tart.

An area where Amadeus Provence also differs from other lines is the seating set-up in the restaurant. Instead of open seating, which is usually the norm, passengers are allocated a table at the beginning of the cruise. You'll always be seated with fellow English speakers and tables for two are available if you prefer to eat alone.

This arrangement noticeably cuts down on congestion in the dining room, as guests aren't walking around looking for free tables. It also means waiters quickly get to know any likes and dislikes.

When it's time to work off the food, the ship has a small gym. There's also a massage room and hair salon, the latter another

rarity on riverboats. Days start with a gentle stretching class, on the sun deck in fine weather or in the lounge. For lazy days, there are ample loungers and chairs on the sun deck and in the swimming pool area.

Evening entertainment is focused around the resident duo who sing and play a variety of instruments. In addition there are visiting entertainers, including an Edith Piaf tribute act. Another novelty is the swashbuckling pirates' night: the dining room was 'ransacked' for dinner, with overturned chairs and cutlery and menus printed on charred paper. Again, crew members dressed up and passengers could join in the fun as we floated on our leisurely journey through the South of France on a sleek ship that stands out from the crowd. ⚓

Spirit of Discovery

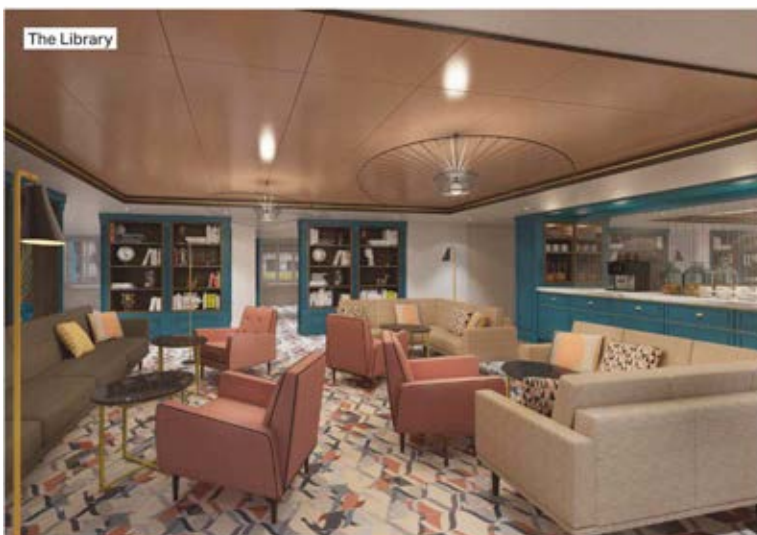


Saga's new small ship, Spirit of Discovery, has been bespoke-built and modelled on boutique London hotels and restaurants. In service from June 2019, its features include an exclusive seafood restaurant, a garden terrace with full-length promenade, a world-class spa and a library housing one of the largest selections of books on the ocean





Standard balcony cabin



The Library



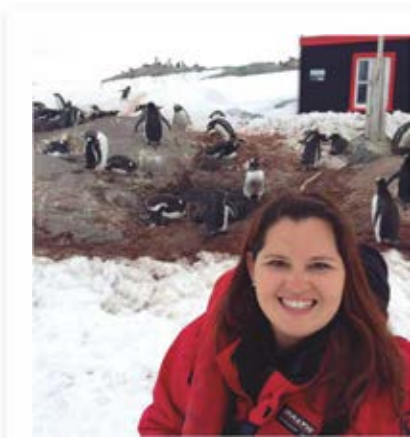
Forward Suite lounge



East to West Restaurant



Lido Outdoor Verandah and Grill



"We have a business model based around freedom"

Sarah Schleder, marine sales specialist for **G Adventures**, discusses penguins, polar plunging and her passion for on-deck dining...

Why is your travel company the best of all travel companies?

We pride ourselves on our team on board who look after our travellers and make sure their trip is the best it can be. We have a business model based around freedom, so, rather than having strict itineraries, we trust our crew to deliver the best experience possible under the specific weather conditions on that given day. Our team are always ready to share their passion and knowledge about wildlife and the environment, so it's really them that makes us stand out.

If your company was a famous person, who would it be and why?

David Attenborough – he's fearless and determined to change the world for the better. You know exactly what you're going to get from an Attenborough documentary: a whole lot of excitement, passion and a better understanding of the world.

Which geographical area do you cover?

Our Expedition cruises travel to both poles and traverse the Norwegian fjords. We also have an amazing fleet of four vessels that cruise the Galapagos Islands, which are all small enough to go off the beaten track to the less-frequented islands and hidden gems of this archipelago. Our river cruise programme operates in four very different destinations – the Peruvian Amazon, the Mekong, the Ganges and the Burgundy Canals.



What's the funniest thing that has happened to you on the road?

I did the Polar Plunge in Antarctica and thought it would be funny to wear a penguin onesie – it made for some great photos and videos but I was so numb from the freezing water that I couldn't get it off! Everyone else was drying off with warm towels and I was just standing there, soaking wet in a furry penguin onesie!

What's the strangest question you have ever been asked about cruise?

I often get asked how high the swell will be and how seasick they will get. But my favourite question lately was whether or not we accept Bitcoin (the answer is no, ha ha).

How many of your cruise line's ships have you sailed on? Do you have a favourite?

I have done more marine trips than any of my colleagues! I've been on the G Expedition to Antarctica and Svalbard. I've also been to the Galapagos on the Xavier III and on our Mekong river cruise from Siem Reap to Ho Chi Minh City aboard the Tour Tiou II. Plus I've been on two of our small sailing boats in Cuba and the Maldives. My favourite has to be Antarctica though, just because it's such a special place and so unique, plus I'm obsessed with penguins.

Do you have a favourite on-board restaurant and why?

My favourite dining experience has to be the barbecue we have once per trip on the G Expedition. In the Arctic, we enjoyed the meal on deck while a Minky whale entertained us right next to the ship! In the Antarctic though, we feasted while watching penguins porpoising around us. That barbecue is always a real highlight for people who cruise with us. Oh, and did I mention there is mulled wine to help everyone warm up?



Mulled wine helps passengers warm up in cold climes

Which port would you definitely disembark in?

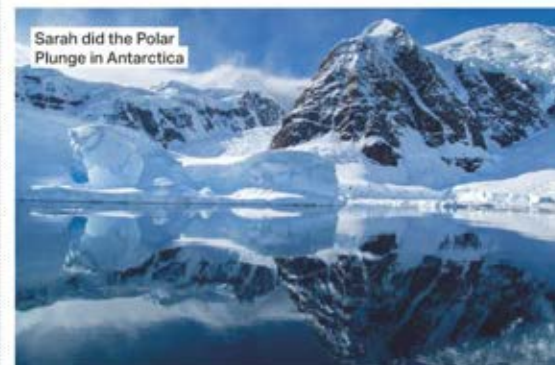
The small island of Djiggaru in the Maldives. There are no hotels or tourism, so it was really special to meet the locals and get a proper understanding of what Maldivian life is really like when you take the tourist resorts out of the equation.

Which cruise is on your bucket list?

We have just launched sailing in Sri Lanka on a catamaran that takes just eight people. We're the first operator to offer a sailing tour in Sri Lanka and everyone here is itching to get on that trip! If you time it right, there's some excellent opportunities for spotting blue whales off the coast of Sri Lanka.

If you didn't work in the cruise industry, what would you do?

If I didn't work for G Adventures, I'd probably be working in the field of conservation in Africa.



Sarah did the Polar Plunge in Antarctica



Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines

FREE Cashback* + FREE Drinks or Tours*



FREE Cashback on 20 cruises, in addition to other **FREE** Cruise Sale benefits.

Guests now have the opportunity to take advantage of **FREE Cashback***, worth up to £200 per person on a host of enticing sailings – that's on top of our other fantastic **FREE** benefits, making their holiday even better value.

With these tempting offers only available until 1st March, there's never been a better time for guests to explore the world on Fred. Olsen's smaller, friendlier ships.

For further information call **Trade Support** on **01473 746 164**,
or visit our dedicated agent website at **fredolsencruises.com/agent**

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