

cruise

TRADE NEWS

FAR-FLUNG ADVENTURES

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FLY-CRUISE PROGRAMME

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QUEEN MARY 2

NEW LAUNCHES, NEW FACES, NEW PLACES



Welcome to the May issue of Cruise Trade News, where we talk to Fred. Olsen's recently appointed head of sales Mike Evans. Having been with the operator for 20 years, there's nothing he

doesn't know about cruise. Plenty of agents know Mike and he understands how important the trade is to Fred. Olsen's success.

Another company that recognises its agents is Royal Caribbean, which took some of its best-selling Club Royal members on an exclusive trip to Hong Kong and Macau. Judging by the report from CTN's Marine Matringe, who accompanied the trip, they all had a great time.

In addition to covering 'what's new' in the world of the cruise industry, CTN has plenty of exciting news of its own. First, we've launched our Luxury Cruise supplement – a handy guide to everything the busy travel agent needs to help sell this lucrative sector of the market.

Secondly, some new crew members have joined the CTN ship. Welcome aboard to Andrew Say, who joins as CTN's new publisher and Rebecca Barnes, who's taken over as CTN's new editor.

Enjoy the issue...

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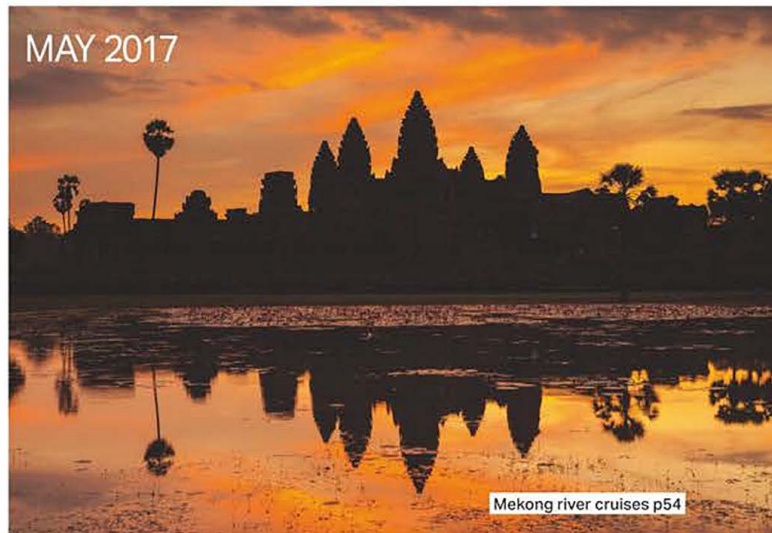
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HAVANA WELCOMES NORWEGIAN SKY

By Lisa James



Norwegian Sky in Havana

Top executives from Norwegian Cruise Line were on board Norwegian Sky when the ship arrived in Havana, capital of Cuba, earlier this month.

Norwegian Sky is the line's first ship to sail to Cuba and the milestone was described as 'a momentous day' by NCL Holidays president and CEO Frank Del Rio.

He added: "Sailing into Havana harbour

today, we were welcomed by the Cuban people with open arms and excitement to share their incredible culture with our guests."

NCL president and CEO Andy Stuart said: "Our cruises to Cuba offer our guests a unique opportunity to engage in true cultural immersion with the freedom and flexibility to explore this destination on

their own timetable and as they choose.

"We look forward to our guests experiencing the wonderful hospitality of the Cuban people aboard each of our many sailings to Cuba to come."

The inaugural call was the first of Norwegian Sky's weekly round-trip cruises from Miami to Cuba.

The ship will sail a total of 53 four-day voyages to Cuba, with 52 including an overnight stay in Havana.

The overnight stay means guests will be able to explore Cuba at their leisure, visiting historical sites such as Old Havana, a UNESCO World Heritage Site; experiencing the island's art and music as well as meeting its residents through people-to-people exchanges.

There is a choice of 14 half- and full-day shore excursions for passengers, including a farm-to-table dining experience; the flora and fauna of Soroa and exploring modern Havana in an American classic car.

The premium, all-inclusive Norwegian Sky will also call at NCL's private island in the Bahamas, Great Stirrup Cay.

The island recently underwent a series of guest enhancements to include additional pathways, seating and shaded lounge areas. More features are to come, including a private luxury lagoon enclave.

BACK TO THE BIG EASY FOR ROYAL CARIBBEAN

Royal Caribbean will return to New Orleans for 2018-19 as part of a series of new sailings from the US Gulf Coast, with itineraries now on sale.

It is the first time in three years the cruise line will have based a ship in New Orleans.

Vision of the Seas will be based in the city from December 15 2018, and will sail seven-night itineraries across the Bahamas and Yucatan.

Enchantment of the Seas will move from Miami to join Liberty of the Seas in Galveston, Texas, offering four- and five-night Caribbean cruises that will complement Liberty's popular seven-night Caribbean sailings.

Royal Caribbean says the two new offerings bring more options and easy access from the Gulf Coast for adventure seekers in the region to embark on journeys to world-renowned



Royal Caribbean returns to New Orleans

dive destinations, explore ancient ruins of past civilisations and discover the natural beauty of rainforests.

Before repositioning to the ship's new home in New Orleans, Vision of the Seas will offer two 16-night sailings through the Panama Canal from Miami to Los Angeles and from Los Angeles to New Orleans.

This will be the first time in three years that Royal Caribbean will journey through the canal.

Long-time Asia-Pacific resident Mariner of the Seas will return to the US to a new homeport, Miami and will become the first Voyager-class ship to offer short Caribbean sailings.

The three- and four-night itineraries from PortMiami to the Bahamas begin on June 21 2018, following a 32-day revitalisation.

Prior to going into drydock, Mariner will embark on a previously announced Global Odyssey, consisting of three 13- to 15-night sailings from Singapore to Dubai, Dubai to Barcelona and Barcelona to Miami.

Guests currently booked on Enchantment for sailings departing Miami after June 23 will be offered the option to transfer to Mariner of the Seas.

TRADE AGREES MALALA HAS THE EDGE

Celebrity Cruises says it has been overwhelmed by the enthusiastic response to news of its two-year partnership with Malala Fund.

As part of the agreement, 19-year-old Malala Yousafzai will become Godmother of the cruise line's newest ship, Celebrity Edge, which debuts in late 2018.

Celebrity will also support the Malala Fund's aim of 'working for a world where all girls can learn for 12 years and lead without fear'.

Celebrity vice-president and managing director UK and Ireland and Asia Jo Rzymowska said: "It's been lovely to see

the response from our guests and trade partners. I've had lots of lovely emails and it would be great to work together with our trade partners to see how we can further support this very worthwhile cause."

Malala began her life as an activist at 11 years of age, writing a secret blog about life under the Taliban, who would not permit girls to go to school. She was targeted for her advocacy and, at 15, was shot on her school bus. She survived and continued her campaign for girls' education around the world.

Richard Fain, chairman and CEO of Celebrity's parent company Royal

Caribbean Cruises Ltd said: "Malala is an inspiration and a voice of hope. This young woman is on a powerful mission, and we support it 100%. We are deeply honoured to name Malala the Godmother of Celebrity Edge, and we're excited to team up with her and the Malala Fund to champion the global right to education."

In 2014, Malala became the youngest-ever Nobel Peace Prize recipient, donating her entire prize earnings to finance a secondary school for girls in Pakistan. She is also a UN Messenger of Peace.

[See Jo Rzymowska's comment on page 12](#)



Celebrity Edge godmother Malala

NORWEGIAN FJORDS BROCHURE

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines has launched a new Norwegian Fjords brochure.

Called Spellbinding Norway, it has nine itineraries for 2017 and nine for 2018.

Fred. Olsen sales and marketing director Justin Stanton said: "With Norwegian heritage that dates back to 1848, and smaller ships that can sail into places out of reach to larger vessels, Fred. Olsen can show this region like no-one else."

Norwegian Fjords tours are the line's best-selling, new-to-cruise itineraries and the brochure includes some ideal starter cruises, such as a five-night Fjords cruise on Balmoral from Newcastle on August 23. The itinerary takes in ports of call at Bergen and Eidfjord, starting at £799 per person. Alternatively, an eight-night Scenic Sights of Norway's Fjordland' cruise on Boudicca departs Liverpool on July 13, with prices from £1,199 per person.



Silversea held a glittering event at Villa Necchi in Milan ahead of its Silver Muse 'shakedown cruise', attended by travel agent partners and media. Left-right: Silversea head of marketing

UK Erin Johnson; the PC Agency CEO Paul Charles; Silversea head of sales UK Connie Georgiou; a Silversea guest passenger; and Silversea managing director UK Lisa McAuley.

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Ocean NEWS

HANSEATIC BOWS OUT IN STYLE WITH FINAL CRUISES

Expedition cruise line Hapag-Lloyd Cruises has rolled out a new catalogue for the 2018/19 season, which features voyages on Hanseatic and Bremen.

The new programme features two international cruises on the five-star, 175-passenger Hanseatic and three on the four-star, 155-passenger Bremen, which are intended to serve as a transition until the launch of the new international expedition ship Hanseatic inspiration in October 2019.

The five English-speaking cruises include expeditions to Antarctica and the Arctic,

with Bremen sailing through the Northeast Passage next summer.

Summer cruises for Hanseatic include the 18-day Expedition course from Kangerlussuaq to Kangerlussuaq, departing on August 7. The voyage takes in: Uummannaq, Ilulissat and Disko Bay on the west coast of Greenland; Baffin Island, Beechey Island and Ellesmere Island on the Northern Canadian Arctic; Nares Strait and Northwest Coast of Greenland. Prices lead in at £12,265 per person cruise-only.

Hanseatic's final voyage for Hapag-Lloyd

will see the ship leave the high Arctic and head to Greenland, on to Disko Bay and then across the Atlantic to Hamburg.

Meanwhile, sample winter cruises for Bremen include the 19-day Expedition Antarctica from Ushuaia to Ushuaia, departing on February 10, 2019. This voyage takes in South Georgia, South Orkney Islands, South Shetland Islands and Antarctic Peninsula, with crossing of the Antarctic Circle. Prices lead in at £11,638 per person cruise-only.

hl-cruises.com



Final voyages for Hanseatic on sale

BIG NAMES FOR BRITANNIA

More stars of music, TV and stage have been added to the line-up at the Limelight Club on P&O Cruises' Britannia.

They include TV star Anne Reid MBE, who will appear on a seven-night Norwegian Fjords cruise departing on June 18, from £663 per person and X Factor runner-up Jahméne Douglas, who will sail on a 14-night Spain, France and Italy cruise departing on October 13, from £949 per person. TV and stage star Claire Sweeney will also perform on five Britannia cruises, including a 14-night France, Monaco and Italy cruise departing on July 22, with prices from £1,299 per person.

Guests can also see Chesney Hawkes and Boyzlife.

BECOME A CUBA EXPERT WITH VOYAGES TO ANTIQUITY

Voyages to Antiquity has updated its training programme following the launch of its Cuba and Caribbean brochure earlier this year.

A dedicated Cuba and the Caribbean 2017-18 module has been added to the Voyages to Antiquity Expert online training facility to help agents become better accustomed to selling the new programme, which sees the discovery cruise line call into Cuba for the first time.

Itineraries are on sale now for the winter season on board the line's 350-passenger ship Aegean Odyssey, with a choice of port calls including Jamaica, Barbados, the Grenadines, Antigua, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia and Cuba.

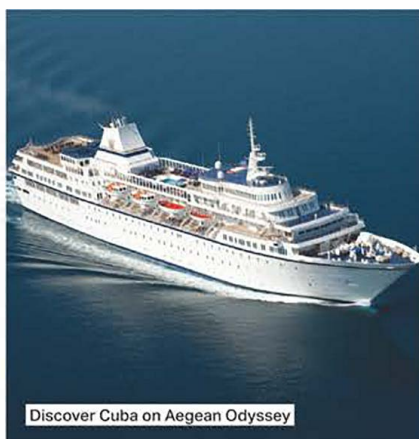
Ports of call in Cuba are Havana, Cienfuegos, Casilda, Trinidad and Santiago de Cuba.

Land tours are included in the fare at most ports, with optional choices.

Agents can win up to £35 in vouchers and have access to further exclusive offers, farm trip invitations and advance notice of new programmes.

In addition, all agents making a new booking during May and June will be automatically entered into a prize draw to win a cruise for two people to Cuba including flights, transfers, gratuities, shore excursions and wine, beer and soft drinks with dinner.

[More details in Tools of the Trade, page 17](#)



Discover Cuba on Aegean Odyssey



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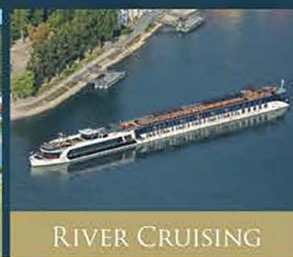
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river NEWS

AGENTS 'VITAL' TO SUCCESS OF PANDAW'S IRRAWADDY ADDITION

River cruise specialist Pandaw Expeditions has underlined its commitment to the trade as it launches its new Myanmar tour.

The new expedition sails into the heart of the Irrawaddy Delta, with three departures scheduled from March 2018 and the option for more if demand dictates.

Vice-president sales and marketing Marco Rosa said: "We have a high percentage of repeat clients – 47% have cruised with us before and we are consistently looking to offer new places for existing clients. We've had good feedback from clients and the trade and there is excitement about the fact it's new.

"As we only sell the cruise element, the trade continues to be important to us. The consumer has to go through the trade and would not be comfortable booking their own flights and transfers."

There is also additional opportunity for agents to boost commission by adding pre- and post-tours.

During the seven-day Great Irrawaddy Delta tour, the 16-passenger Katha Pandaw will navigate guests through a complex labyrinth of waterways that no other river



Katha Pandaw will sail a seven-day Great Irrawaddy Delta tour

cruise company operates in. From Rangoon, the voyage takes guests to Pyapon, Bogale, Myaungmya, Bassein, Wakema, Maubin and back to the starting point of Burma's capital.

Rosa added: "These villages are completely unexplored by tourism. It's also exciting for us, because when we go to places we haven't been to before, we don't know

what to expect either. It's new for us and it's new for them. If, along the way, we discover a new feature, we can change future sailings accordingly."

Prices start at £1,695 per person cruise-only for seven nights on the 16-cabin Katha Pandaw, including entrance fees, guide services, meals and drinks.

UNIWORLD'S FINEST HOUR

Uniworld has teamed up with Insight Vacations and Luxury Gold again to create a new Europe's Finest brochure, combining land-touring holidays with cruises.

Itineraries begin with a land tour of some of the most famous and historic destinations with the two escorted tours specialists, which are sister companies of Uniworld, before boarding an all-inclusive ship.

Europe's Finest 2017 follows from a successful inaugural joint-venture brochure last year. The 2017 programme features six cruise and tour itineraries, including a 15-day Switzerland and the Rhine option, from £4,813 per person and a 17-day Portugal and the Douro package, from £4,713 per person.

A new, 19-day Elegance of England and France package has been created for the collection, from £6,639 per person.

There are also ideas for special experiences such as lunch in a Michelin-starred restaurant on Capri. Insight Vacations and Luxury Gold UK head of sales Paul Melinis said: "We're passionate about providing enriching travel

experiences and the most luxurious European holidays – a passion we share with our sister brand Uniworld.

"By pairing our award-winning escorted journeys with Uniworld's renowned boutique river cruises, this collection will take guests far beyond the well-trodden path in a refined, one-of-a-kind style."

Uniworld has extended its You Deserve the Best incentive offer until June 30, meaning agents can upsell cruises with complimentary stateroom upgrades, economy air, and chauffeur home pick up.

www.uniworld.com/uk



Uniworld's refined style



The Karnak Temple at Luxor

NILE OFFERS

Agents can get a £10 shopping voucher for every adult booking made on a selection of Nile cruises with Cyphon Holidays during the week beginning June 12.

They include a seven-night, five-star Emilio Prestige cruise, taking in Luxor, Esna, Aswan and Edfu from £739 per person; a five-star Alhambra Nile cruise calling at Luxor, Esna, Kom Ombo and Aswan from £785 per person and a premium Nile cruise taking in all five ports of call, from £795 per person.

Another option is a 10-night cruise-and-stay from £1,029 per person, including seven nights on the Emilio Prestige from Luxor to Edfu via Esna and Aswan and three nights at the Steigenberger Nile Palace.

For more information, call 0208 340 7612.

CARNIVAL TO BUILD NEW PORT ON GRAND BAHAMA

LISA JAMES REPORTS ON CARNIVAL CRUISE LINE'S PARTNERSHIP WITH THE BAHAMIAN GOVERNMENT TO ATTRACT MORE VISITORS

Carnival Cruise Line and the Bahamian government have signed an agreement to construct a new cruise port facility on Grand Bahama Island.

The planned port will be the largest purpose-built cruise facility ever constructed in the Bahamas and will be funded and operated by Carnival.

Features will include a one-mile stretch of beach, food, beverage and shopping outlets, a

wide array of water-based amenities and other recreational facilities. The port will also feature a pier capable of accommodating two of Carnival's largest cruise ships simultaneously and is expected to eventually host up to one million guests annually.

The multimillion-dollar project will provide a significant economic benefit for the country of the Bahamas, including many employment and economic opportunities throughout the

development, construction and ongoing operation once completed.

Carnival president Christine Duffy said: "Carnival Cruise Line is the leader in year-round cruising to the Bahamas and this new development will not only provide a one-of-a-kind destination experience for our guests, but it will further solidify our partnership with the people of the Bahamas."

This year, Carnival Corporation cruise lines will bring almost three million guests to the Bahamas via calls to Nassau, Freeport, Grand Bahama, Half Moon Cay and Princess Cays, the latter two of which were developed and are operated by Carnival Corporation brands Holland America Line and Princess Cruises.

Carnival Corporation president and CEO Arnold Donald said: "When Ted Arison, the founder of Carnival and the modern-day cruise industry, embarked on his first cruise, it was to the Bahamas.

"From that day until now, the Bahamas continues to be one of the most strategic and important destinations for our company."

Meanwhile, Carnival Corporation has unveiled artwork for its new €30 million cruise terminal at the Port of Barcelona.

The terminal will be Carnival's second in Barcelona and will be able to accommodate the company's new class of next-generation green cruise ships that are fully operated by Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG).

carnival.com/uk



The new port on Grand Bahama will be able to accommodate two of Carnival's largest ships simultaneously

SPEND WITH PRINCESS

Agents can secure customers up to \$350 in onboard spend as part of a Princess Cruises special offer running for the next two months.

The offer is valid on 16 Europe sailings on Sapphire Princess for 2018, on bookings made by July 31.

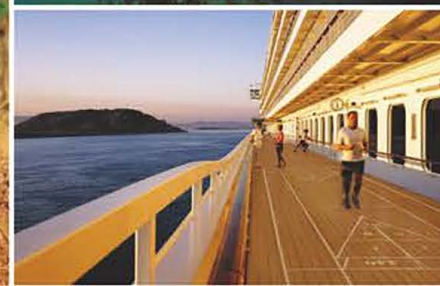
The amount of on-board spending money will depend on the length of the cruise and the grade of stateroom that is booked. Example itineraries that are included in the offer are a 14-night Mediterranean cruise, calling at Barcelona, Rome (Civitavecchia), Florence/Pisa (Livorno), Genoa, Marseille and Gibraltar, from £1,499 per person.

Guests are eligible for up to \$250 on-board spend per stateroom for a seven-night Scandinavia cruise, calling at Brussels/Bruges (Zeebrugge), Copenhagen, Helsingborg and Oslo. Prices start at £999 per person.

princess.com/sapphire



Uniworld sales manager north, James Howlett (front left), met with a group of homeworkers in Manchester for one of the company's regular 'coffee and cake' meetings as part of its new Homeworker Network initiative.



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Jo RZYMOWSKA

Vice-president and managing director, UK and Ireland and Asia, Celebrity Cruises

When our president and CEO Lisa Lutoff-Perlo called me to tell me that it was happening – that the Malala Fund had agreed to work with us and Malala was to be Godmother of our ship *Celebrity Edge* – I was really emotional.

Malala Yousafzai has become a symbol of hope all over the world for her remarkable bravery. In 2012 when she was just 14, she was shot by the Taliban in Pakistan for demanding that girls be allowed to receive an education.

Against all odds, she survived and has become the youngest-ever Nobel Peace Prize recipient for her global campaign for woman's rights and education.

Lisa spent a lot of time talking to the Malala Fund about how we could work with them, which resulted in a meeting with Malala and her parents. Never in our wildest dreams did we think that this would come true.

Malala Fund does incredible due diligence and we're thrilled it has chosen

"Our crew come from 50 different nationalities and Malala understood that being Godmother means being guardian of them, looking after the ship"

to partner with us. When we sat down to think about the women that truly inspired us, she shone out.

Celebrity Cruises' whole brand ethos is very much about diversity and inclusion. We're all about opening up the world. Our whole *raison d'être* is to bring people together from all different backgrounds, both crew and guests.

Our crew come from 50 different nationalities and Malala understood that being Godmother means being guardian of them, looking after the ship.

We will be supporting the Malala Fund looking at projects to educate women all over the world.

Peter SHANKS

Development director, Imagine Cruising



It's our ambition at Imagine Cruising to offer more than just a cruise.

Our latest idea encompassed just that – combining a four-day stay in Dubai, with an exclusive gala dinner and concert on the beach starring opera singer Katherine Jenkins, followed by a sailing home for 500 clients on the most famous ocean liner in the world.

When our product team first came up with the idea there was a sense of excitement for all of us. It was bigger than anything we had done before and we knew it would work. The

first challenge was to ensure our marketing captured the essence of just how special the event would be. Judging by just how fast it sold out, that first objective was a tick.

Next came the tricky part – pulling all aspects of the event together and fitting it seamlessly into the holiday. Like any event, it's all in the detail.

The dinner and concert took place on a grass lawn in the gardens of the Jumeirah Beach Hotel in front of the Burj Al Arab. And yes, as it was a black-tie event, we even

provided heel stoppers to ensure high heels did not sink into the grass. The highlight of the event was, of course, Katherine Jenkins. She was adorable, friendly and boy, can she sing. As she finished her encore with 'Time to Say Goodbye' fireworks lit up the sky above the Burj Al Arab. It was spectacular. Another tick.

But it wasn't over. Customers then joined Queen Mary 2 to sail back to Southampton, for the final element of their once-in-a-lifetime unique experience.

"Not only were our customers delighted, every member of the Imagine team felt a sense of pride in what they had achieved –with renewed passion to create unique experiences for our customers in the future"

Not only were our customers delighted, every member of the Imagine team felt a sense of pride in what they had achieved, with renewed passion to create unique experiences for our customers in the future.

It was a terrific success and a great example of how different Imagine Cruising is.

We are doing it all again in Rome with Katherine Jenkins next month, but this time in a famous castle alongside a lake on the outskirts of Rome, combined with a cruise on Queen Victoria. We can't wait.

A firework display brought the four-day stay in Dubai to an end

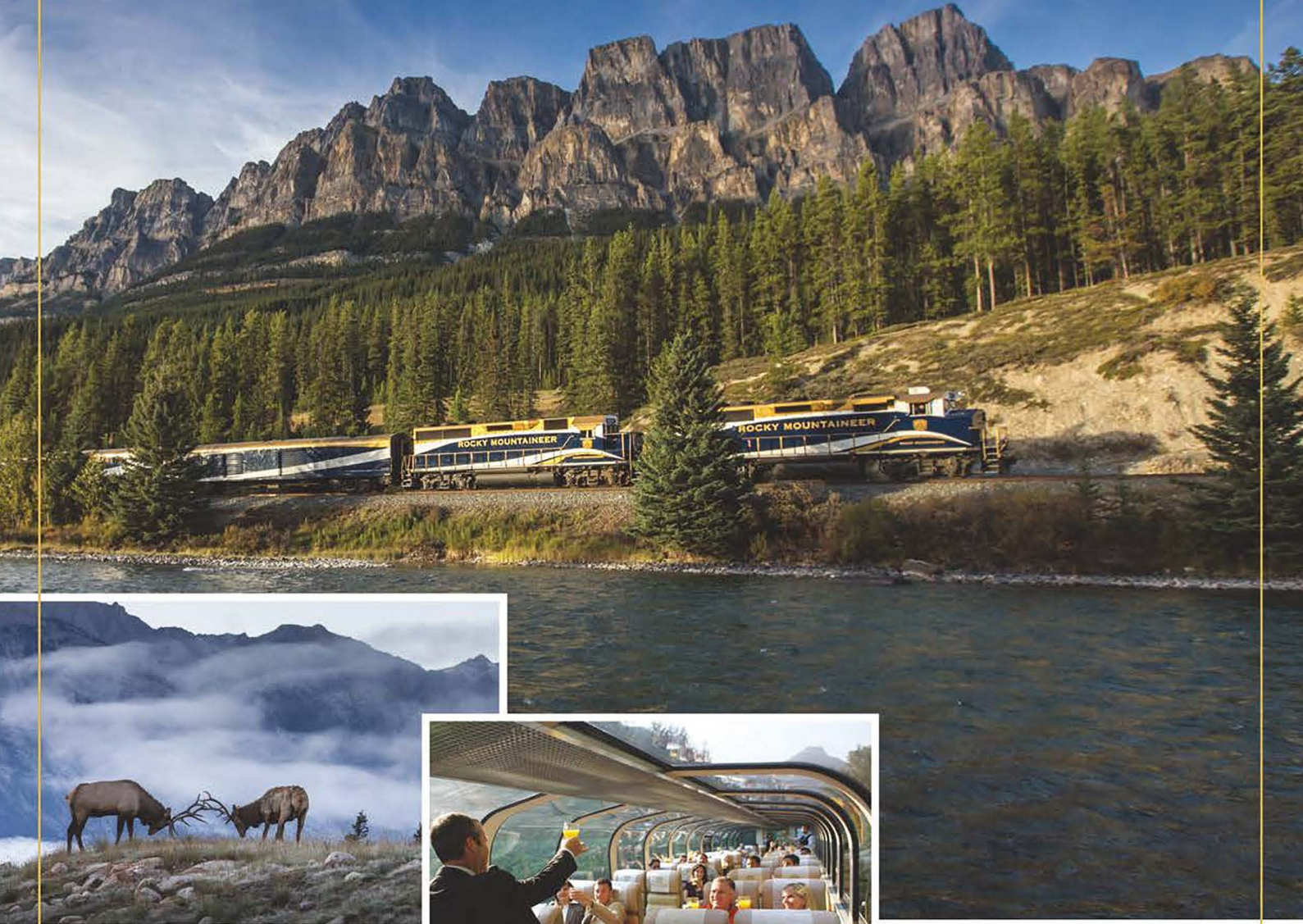




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TOOLS of the TRADE

WIN A PLACE ON A SOUTH PACIFIC ADVENTURE

INCENTIVE

Agents can win a place on a fam trip on the luxury sailing ship Paul Gauguin in a new booking incentive.

Between now and June 30, agents booking any Paul Gauguin 2017 or 2018 sailing will be entered into a draw to win a place on a fam trip to the South Pacific.

The trip will include return scheduled flights from London, the cruise and port taxes for one person. There is no limit to the number of entries each agent can have so the more bookings they make, the more prize draw entries they will receive and the more chance they will have of winning.

PAUL GAUGUIN TOOLS

Tel: 020 7399 7691

Website: pgcruises.com



ENTER

SIGN UP TO SEE NCL'S JADE



There are still places up for grabs on agent visits to Norwegian Cruise Lines' ship Jade. Southampton ship visits take place on several dates in May, June, August and September. Agents from other parts of the UK can visit Jade in port at Cork on May 25; Dublin on May 26; Belfast on May 27; Inverness on May 30; Edinburgh on August 31 and Newcastle on September 1.

NCL TOOLS

Register at
ukpartnershiprelations@ncl.com
Tel: 02381 245 030



FLY FREE WITH HAL

OFFER

Holland America Line is offering free flights on selected European cruises as part of its ReadySetSail promotion.

Guests can fly for free from London and some regional airports when booking specific cruises, as well as benefit from a number of other value-added offers, such as pre-paid gratuities and on-board spend of up to \$500.

The offer is based on cruises between June 2017 and March 2018. Bookings must be made by June 1 for the offers to be valid.

Itineraries include a 10-night Adriatic Dream cruise on board Westerdam on August 15, with ports of call including Dubrovnik, Corfu and Venice. Prices start at £1,649 per person.

For an alternative summer escape, travellers can book the 12-night Baltic Adventure on various dates in June, July and August, on board Zuiderdam.

HAL TOOLS

Tel: 0843 374 2300

Website: hollandamerica.co.uk

DINNER FOR TWO WITH SILVERSEA... AND A FAM TRIP

INCENTIVE

Silversea is giving agents the chance to win lunch or dinner for two at a Relais & Châteaux property as part of the Silversea Advocates recognition programme.

Agents can dine at one of 200 restaurants including Glenapp Castle, Scotland; Gravetye Manor, Sussex and Hartwell House, Oxford.

The cruise line has an exclusive partnership at sea with Relais & Châteaux and offers its signature dishes of La Collection du Monde on every Silversea ship, as well as Culinary Arts voyages and innovative cooking schools, L'Ecole des Chefs.

Ten agents will be chosen from a shortlist provided by Silversea's regional sales managers, based on sales performance, marketing

promotions or events. Silversea head of trade sales and partnerships UK and Ireland Connie Georgiou said: "Our Advocates programme has proved to be very popular with agents and has helped recognise the passion and dedication of our teams."

"We are delighted to offer

winners a gourmet meal at a property of their choosing and a taste of the Silversea experience onshore."

In addition, the 10 top agents will get the opportunity to experience the ultra-luxury Silversea product themselves on a VIP fam trip at the end of this year.



SILVERSEA TOOLS

Tel: 0844 251 0837

Website: silverseacademy.com

APPOINTMENTS



Rebecca Barnes has been appointed editor of **Cruise Trade News**. With 17 years' experience, she has written travel content for national and specialist titles. Meanwhile, **Andrew Say** has joined the magazine as publisher. He was previously commercial director at Reader Offers.



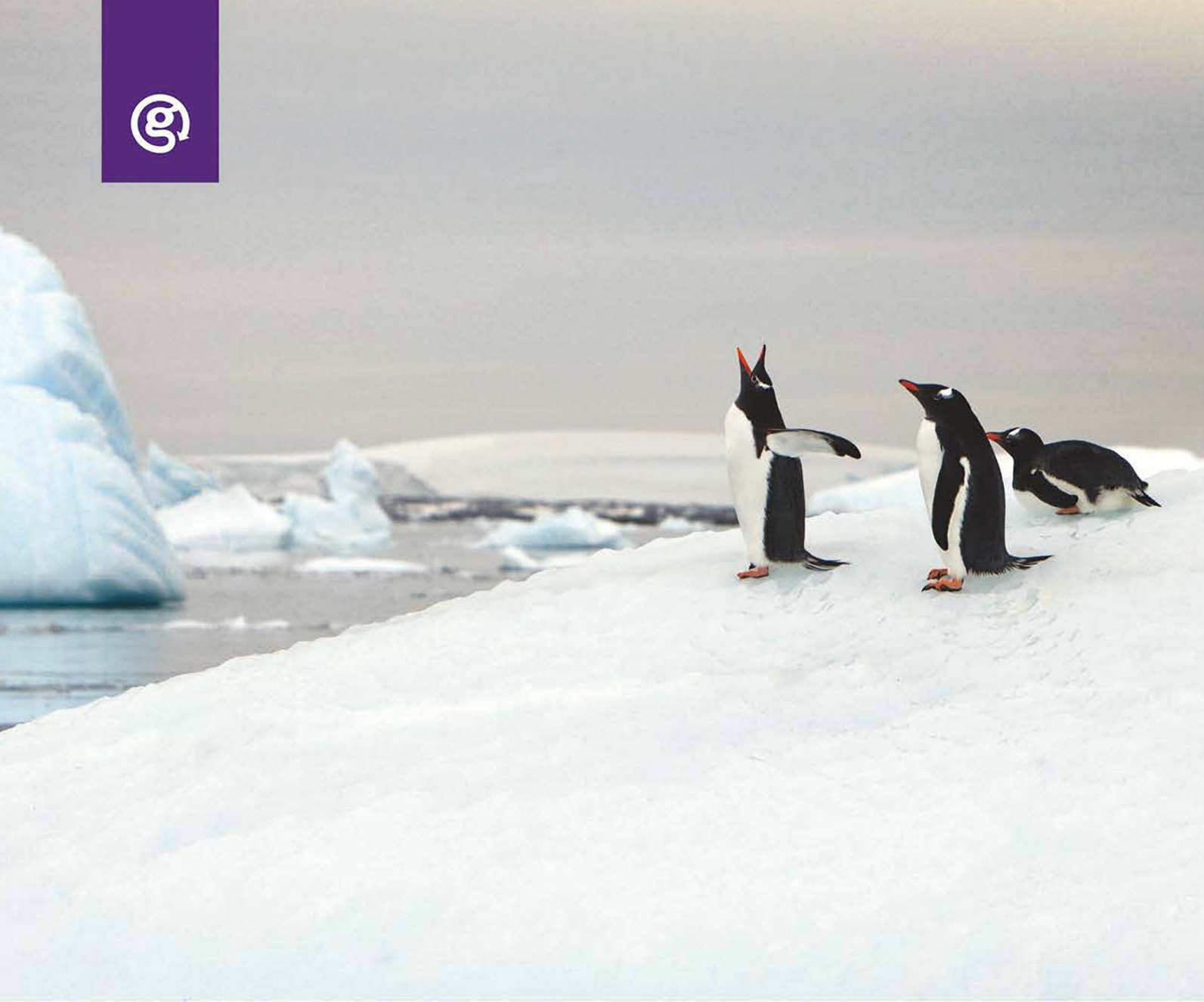
Cruise and Maritime Voyages has strengthened its marketing team with the appointment of **Rebecca Jones** as marketing executive. She has a background in marketing and public relations, including working for Southend Airport for four years.



Celebrity Cruises has expanded its dedicated sales team with the appointment of **Amanda Docherty** as regional sales manager for the northeast. Docherty will report to head of sales, Nicola McNeish and will work alongside the sales team to support trade partners.



Seabourn has promoted **Teresa Haughey** to the role of director, hotel services for hotel operations and **Daniel Putzhammer** to director, food and beverage operations. Haughey joined Seabourn as chief purser in 2007. Putzhammer joined Seabourn as a waiter in 2005.



The Big Chill Sale

**Book now and save up to 20% on
2018 and 2019 G Expedition cruises**

The Arctic, Antarctica, and Norway rank high on the world's "Mind-Blowing Places to Explore" list, and G Adventures is making it even easier for you to cross them off yours. Right now, you can save big on polar cruises with the Big Chill Sale. Select 2018 and 2019 Arctic, Antarctica, and Norway cruises aboard the G Expedition are on sale now for up to 20% off when booked by July 3, 2017. Book early. At these prices, the Big Chill won't last long.

Agent Hotline 0344 272 2200
gadventures.co.uk



TOOLS of the TRADE

EYES DOWN FOR CRYSTAL BINGO

Crystal's Bonus Bingo incentive, which runs until June 30, sees UK agents work their way across five lines on a Bingo card with prizes awarded as each line is completed. Any UK agents who achieve the ultimate goal of completing line five within the incentive period will be rewarded with a place on a fam trip for themselves plus a guest. Other prizes include:

- Complete line one = a £50 lifestyle voucher
- Complete line two = a £100 lifestyle voucher
- Complete line three = a £150 lifestyle voucher
- Complete line four = a £250 lifestyle voucher
- Plus a number of surprise spot prizes

Examples of how agents can earn stamps on their bingo cards include:

- Having a catch-up with one of the sales team;
- Following the sales team on social media;
- Making a booking;
- Snapping a cheeky selfie with one of the sales team;
- Organising a client event or mailing;
- Recommending Crystal to a client;
- Taking the Crystal training on OTT.

Details of surprise 'Spot Prize' stamps will be announced on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram so agents should follow @cruiseportfolio for details.

EARN WHILE YOU LEARN

Agents can earn shopping vouchers and could win a cruise for two with Voyages to Antiquity.

Until the end of June a new agent signing up to VTAEExpert will automatically get a £5 Love2Shop voucher. Further vouchers can be earned by completing the online training programme and newly updated winter modules.

Agents who have completed the training will receive an additional £20 Love2Shop voucher for every booking made on a winter 2017-18 Cuba and Caribbean cruise.

And, all bookings made during the campaign will be automatically entered in a draw to win a Cuba cruise.

VOYAGES TO ANTIQUITY TOOLS

Website: vtaexpert.com



WIN A CELEBRITY CRUISE



There is still time to enter the Celebrity Cruises competition to win a 14-night fly-cruise from Miami.

Any agent who confirms a new Celebrity Cruises booking including flights with Aer Lingus, or promotes online or in-store before the end of May will be entered into a prize draw to be in with a chance to win the luxury Caribbean holiday on-board Celebrity Eclipse.

There are three ways for agents to enter:

- Promote the Celebrity Cruises and Aer Lingus fly/cruise holiday on Facebook, website or in the shop

window to receive one entry credit into the prize draw;

- Make one fly-cruise booking with Celebrity Cruises and Aer Lingus flights to receive two entry credits into the prize draw;
- Make one Celebrity Cruises Suite Class booking with Aer Lingus flights, or book a Celebrity Cruises sailing with business class Aer Lingus flights to receive two entries into the prize draw.

CELEBRITY TOOLS

More details at: cruisingpower.ie

EARLY-BOOKING WINDOW STILL OPEN WITH AZAMARA

Agents can save clients 30% off selected Azamara Club 2017/18 winter cruises booked by May 31.

Voyage destinations include Thailand, Australia, Dubai and the Caribbean, with savings of up to £900 per person.

Example itineraries include a 13-night Caribbean voyage

on Azamara Quest, departing December 2017, from £2,262 per person, saving £696. Or clients could choose an 18-night Australia to Asia voyage, on March 7, 2018, from Sydney. Ports of call include Brisbane, Thursday Island, Darwin, Indonesia and Singapore, with prices from £3,742 per person, saving £936.



IT'S ALL ABOUT THE JOURNEY



Mike Evans

AFTER 25 YEARS WITH FRED. OLSEN CRUISE LINES, NEW HEAD OF SALES **MIKE EVANS** HAS SEEN A LOT OF CHANGES. BUT, AS HE TELLS *LISA JAMES*, THE COMPANY'S FUNDAMENTALS REMAIN THE SAME.



Braemar in Tobago

If you're ever on Fred. Olsen's cruise ship Braemar and you're looking for the company's new head of sales, Mike Evans, you'll find him on the open top deck, enjoying the views.

He's fond of all four ships in the fleet but has a soft-spot for the 900-capacity Braemar, which spends much of the winter fly-cruising in the Caribbean, while sailing out of the UK the rest of the year.

"Braemar's very special," he says. "Size-wise it's a great ship and can get into some of the smaller Caribbean islands, which is what people love.

"The ship has got a fantastic top deck. It's an open area with so much room. When the weather is good, there is nothing better than sitting up there and watching the world go by."

While newer, flashier, bigger and bolder cruise ships often grab the headlines, Fred. Olsen's ships attract a loyal following, with more than 60% repeat passengers.

"A lot of people look at price and what the ships have got in terms of amenities. That's fine, but what they don't look at is what happens when these big ships arrive in port," says Mike.

"In the Mediterranean, there are only six or seven ports of call that these bigger ships can actually dock

in. Take Barcelona for example. The large ships have to be moored way outside and passengers have to board a coach to get to the cruise terminal.

"With our ships, you step off and within a couple of minutes you're striding down The Ramblas. On a Baltic cruise, we're one of only two ships that can dock in the heart of St Petersburg. The others that call there are docked much further down river."

In the 25 years since Mike joined Fred. Olsen, the cruise industry has changed enormously.

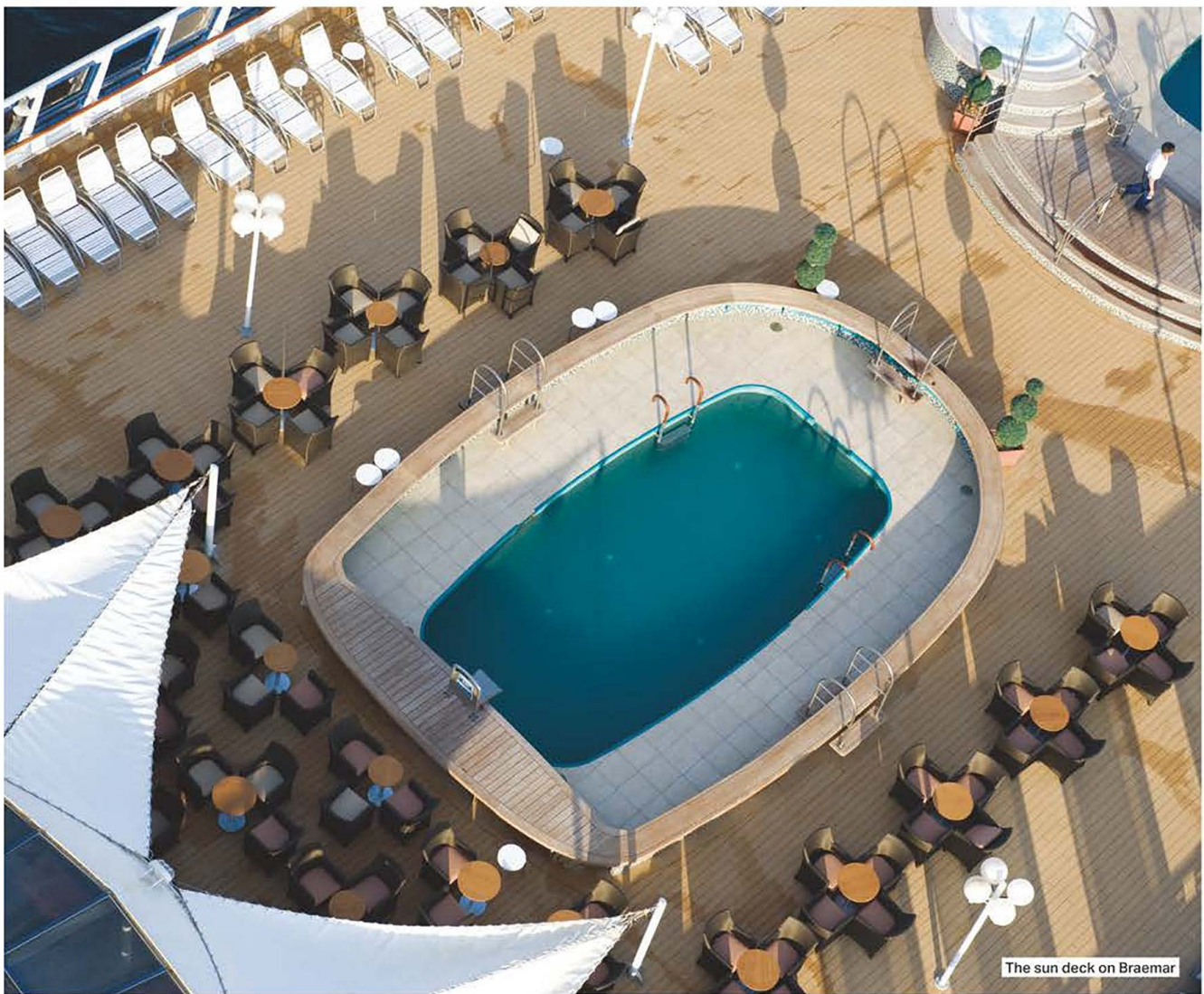
"When I joined this company back in 1992, we had one little ship that carried 400 people. We could sell it out in three months.

"We never had to discount and people just loved it and kept going back to it.

"Back in 1992 and 93, there were probably only about 300,000 to 400,000 people in the UK that actually travelled on cruises. Now it's about two million.

"But with so many different holiday options available now, the new generation of cruisers is not sold on it in the way that they want to do a cruise every year. They may go off and do different holidays, then come back.

"So while our repeat factor is very high – more than 60% – that's over a two to three-year period. Clients



The sun deck on Braemar

may do something different for their next holiday and then come back and think: 'Now it is time to do another Fred holiday'."

So, for agents who don't sell cruise very often, what sort of person would travel on a Fred. Olsen ship?

"Most people on board are over 50, and the age of the average Fred. Olsen guest is 67. Where we score is that people come on board our ships expecting a more sedate lifestyle. It's a country-house feel. They like the fact that, once on board, the staff get to know their name within a day or so. They know exactly who they are, where they're from and what their favourite drink is. Those core values haven't changed in the 25 years I've been with the company.

"And, for 70% of people that travel with us, destination is the first thing they look for."

The best place he's visited is Machu Picchu. And he'd like to go to Antarctica, although not currently on the Fred. Olsen itinerary.

Recently added to Fred. Olsen's extensive programme is a dedicated fly-cruise brochure, with cruise-plus stays in destinations such as Madagascar, Seychelles and Mauritius.

He's pleased with how it's selling. "We soft-launched

the first two to our regular cruisers and they've sold out. The others are selling well and it's looking good."

Well known in the industry, Mike has spent 40 years in travel. He grew up in Folkestone, Kent, left school at 17 and joined Saga Holidays where his best friend's dad was general manager. His first job was sorting the post. From there, he worked in various sectors, including aviation, retail, tourist board and tour ops before being persuaded to join Fred. Olsen by former marketing director Nigel Lingard.

"Nigel sold the company and the business to me and he was right. Of all the companies that I have worked for, this is the nicest."

He officially started as head of sales at the end of April, promoted from his previous role as sales manager – independent retail, although previous sales roles have included regional sales manager for the north of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

He now has responsibility for managing Fred. Olsen's UK sales teams, as well as further developing relations with the travel trade.

"We're looking to engage with the trade even more than we have done in the past and I'm looking forward to increasing our commitment to the retail travel trade." ⚓

FAR FLUNG, FLY-CRUISES WITH FRED. OLSEN

EXCITING GLOBAL DESTINATIONS ARE WITHIN EASY REACH WITH FRED. OLSEN'S NEW FLY-CRUISE PROGRAMME

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines has launched its programme for 2017-19, which features its most extensive fly-cruise offering ever, with a host of new exotic holidays to some of the world's most stunning destinations, with durations between 14 and 38 nights.

Justin Stanton, sales and marketing director for Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, said: "We know our guests want to experience the most spellbinding places on earth, but would prefer to take a shorter time in which to enjoy them. Fred. Olsen guests can choose from a wide range of tempting destinations – from India, Arabia and the islands of the Indian Ocean, to South Africa, Australia and New Zealand – all achievable within a shorter fly-cruise holiday.

"Plus, with a Fred. Olsen fly-cruise, we are able to get our guests closer to the destination, with our smaller ships, innovative itineraries and in-depth, on-shore experiences."

ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME ADVENTURES!

Fred. Olsen's new extensive, fly-cruise 2017-19 programme offers so much variety: soak up the culture and colour of India and Arabia; search for the big five on a safari in South Africa; discover spiritual sites in Asia; spend Christmas in the South Pacific; or watch magical fireworks over Sydney on New Year's Day.

BRINGING THE WORLD CLOSER

Fred. Olsen will be bringing the world's best destinations and experiences closer to its guests in 2017-19. Offering a more extensive fly-cruise programme than ever before, complemented by a wider selection of authentic tours and shore excursions, and taking in the most spectacular special events, festivals and celebrations, it has never been easier to explore the globe with Fred. Olsen.





Opposite page: Enjoy a fly-cruise on Boudicca

Left and bottom: Fred. Olsen is renowned for giving guests a very different kind of holiday with amazing cruises, great on-board facilities and the best crew members in the industry

BEST FOR ITINERARIES

Fred. Olsen takes the time to tailor its cruise programme to celebrate great events and festivals around the world, on more than 135 different itineraries, with a variety of durations, in all the style and comfort of its more 'human-sized' ships – Balmoral, Braemar, Boudicca and Black Watch.

Fred. Olsen is proud to be named best for itineraries by Cruise Critic's independent experts two years in a row, and is renowned for giving guests a very different kind of holiday.

Fred. Olsen's fleet will be visiting no fewer than 228 destinations in 73 countries around the globe in 2018/19, covering 91 areas of scenic cruising.

BENEFIT FROM EXTRA COMMISSION ON FRED. OLSEN FLY-CRUISE HOLIDAYS

The great news for the travel trade is that Fred.

Olsen is now paying commission on the fly-cruise price, raising the commission paid by an average of £75 per person or more (air passenger duty remains non-commissionable).

This change follows valuable feedback from the trade, and reinforces Fred. Olsen's commitment to ensuring that its trade partners are better rewarded for promoting sales of Fred. Olsen's most extensive and ambitious fly-cruise programme ever. So, whether guests want to explore the sights and sounds of India and Arabia, discover spiritual sites in Asia, or spend Christmas in the South Pacific, the world is just a Fred. Olsen fly-cruise away!

For further information on Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines' new fly-cruise programme in 2017-19, visit the website at www.fredolsencruises.com/travelagentcentre, or call the Trade Support Team on 01473 746164 ●

WHERE IN THE WORLD CAN A FRED. OLSEN FLY-CRUISE TAKE YOU?

● **Boudicca's** 14-night D1825 Islands of the Indian Ocean fly-cruise, ex Port Louis, Mauritius, on 29 November 2018

Hop between some of the most beautiful, culturally-diverse islands in the Indian Ocean. Discover paradise in the Seychelles, before cruising Mayotte's stunning lagoon. Seek out Madagascar's unique wildlife, including lemurs and chameleons, before exploring Réunion Island.

● **Black Watch's** 39-night W1827 Pacific Island Christmas and Sydney New Year fly-cruise, ex-Bridgetown, Barbados, on 26 November 2018 (ends in Brisbane, Australia)

● **Relax in the Caribbean** and experience the highlights of South and Central America, before the stunning islands of the South Pacific appear on the horizon. Take time to explore lush island landscapes and sun-soaked beaches in French Polynesia. Round off the trip in Sydney, with the most famous New Year's Eve fireworks celebration in the world, and the iconic Opera House and Harbour Bridge as the backdrop.

● **Boudicca's** 34-night D1901 Ancient Arabia, India and the Mediterranean fly-cruise (adult-only), ex Colombo, Sri Lanka, on 10th January 2019 (ends in Dover)

● **Explore** an incredible list of destinations in Arabia, India and the Mediterranean. Porbandar, the birthplace of Gandhi; the beautiful Musandam Fjords and the Lost City of Ubar in Oman; Jordan's Lost City of Petra and the world's oldest ancient wonder, the Great Pyramid of Giza – there are just so many unforgettable destinations to discover.



Q&A

TOM MORGAN

Key account manager,
Riviera Travel



“We work closely with the trade and are a very trade-friendly company. We never discount so you don’t have to give any commission away to price match.”

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

A: I have been with Riviera Travel for nearly two-and-a-half years. I was attracted to the role because I was looking for something different and wanted to work for a company with a great reputation and products I truly believe in.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT THE CRUISE INDUSTRY?

A: The variety. No two days are the same for me and being able to visit some fantastic destinations is a nice perk of the job. I also get the opportunity to meet some amazing people, both agents and customers.

HOW IS YOUR COMPANY DIFFERENT TO OTHER CRUISE LINES?

A: We are the only five-star British river cruise line in the market and we design our cruises to meet the individual needs of our customers, right down to the little touches such as tea and coffee-making facilities in the cabins.

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB OVER NEXT 12 MONTHS?

A: Increasing our river cruise sales through our travel agent partners.

IF AGENTS ONLY SELL ONE RIVIERA TRAVEL CRUISE ITINERARY THIS YEAR, WHICH ONE SHOULD THAT BE?

A: A cruise along the Danube as it’s a great river cruise for first-timers, but also works for more experienced river cruise customers. They will get to visit lots of the great European cities such as Budapest, Vienna and Bratislava. In Vienna, we bring a traditional string quartet on board and that is also a real highlight.



CV

2014 to date
Riviera Travel,
key account
manager

2013 - 2014
Everyone Active,
regional manager
– east

2010 - 2013
Virgin Active,
dynamics trainer

CAN YOU GIVE US A DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPICAL RIVIERA TRAVEL CUSTOMER?

A: Our customers are typically 50 plus, they’re discerning and have a real passion and enthusiasm for the places they visit.

TELL US ONE THING ABOUT YOUR LIFE OUTSIDE OF RIVIERA TRAVEL THAT AGENTS MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT YOU.

A: Being a Burton Albion season ticket holder. It has allowed me to be smug with other football fans for the last few years as Burton Albion is a club punching above its weight.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FACING CRUISE SALES?

A: Getting the message across to customers what each river cruise brand offers. Clients could probably name four or five river cruise operators but they are unlikely to know what the difference between them is, so it’s important for Riviera Travel to be able to really stand out from our competitors.

HOW DOES THE COMPANY WORK WITH THE TRADE?

A: We work very closely with the trade and are a very trade-friendly company. We never discount so you don’t have to give any commission away to price match.

WHY SHOULD AGENTS SELL CRUISE RATHER THAN A LAND HOLIDAY?

A: The main benefits of a river cruise over a land holiday is getting to experience lots of different places and to be moored right in the heart of the destinations included in the voyage, while experiencing five-star luxury on board.

TOP THREE TIPS FOR AGENTS SELLING CRUISE

1 Explain to customers that all-inclusive is not right for everyone. Some clients might prefer to experience the food in the different destinations the river cruise visits.

2 Learn as much as you can about the river cruise products available to give you the confidence to find the right voyage for your customer.

3 Be confident in your own ability. The fantastic service and extras you can offer the customer means you shouldn’t discount the price when you don’t need to.

UNIWORLD®
BOUTIQUE RIVER CRUISE COLLECTION®
CELEBRATING 40+ YEARS of EXCELLENCE



YOU DESERVE THE BEST

Let us treat your clients to a stateroom upgrade and more.

Your clients deserve the best onboard, in the air and wherever they choose to travel. So Uniworld has crafted a special upgrade offer, customisable just for them. It's brilliant. And it starts now.

THE WORLD IS YOUR CANVAS.

AVAILABLE ON SELECT 2017 ITINERARIES IN EUROPE*

Complimentary stateroom upgrade	+	Free Economy Class air	+	Complimentary chauffeur home pick-up
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AVAILABLE ON SELECT 2017 ITINERARIES IN VIETNAM & CAMBODIA, INDIA OR EGYPT*

Complimentary stateroom upgrade	+	£500 per person off Economy Class air	OR	£1,000 per person off Business Class air
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*Full terms and conditions apply – please visit Uniworld.com/YouDeserveTheBest.





'I have fallen in love with the industry'

James Howlett, Uniworld's sales manager for the north of England, on falling foul of greedy gulls, his love of Vienna and waking up with Christian O'Connell

Why is your cruise line the best of all?

Uniworld ships are different from anything else out there because there is so much passion put into every element. Every detail of the excursions, meals, beverages and ships is painstakingly thought out. Service is paramount for Uniworld, so we have one of the highest staff-to-guest ratios in the market. The ships are beautifully designed and all different from each other. What other cruise line can lay claim to having original works of art by Klimt and Opie, handmade Savoir beds and fabric by Pierre Fray?

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

Probably Audrey Hepburn as she embodies what the brand is all about. She was, and remains, one of the most stylish and beautiful women of all time.

How long have you worked for Uniworld?

Only three months, but I absolutely love it. The team is so fantastic.

What was your very first job?

I was a professional rugby player but I suffered an injury that ended my playing days and meant I had to get a real job.

Which geographical area do you cover?

I cover the fabulous north, which pretty much includes everything north of Birmingham, and Wales.

What three things can you not get through the working day without?

The Christian O'Connell breakfast show on Absolute Radio has become my early-morning staple, oh and drinking my body weight in coffee.

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

I was in Whitby, and obviously, I had fish and chips for lunch. As I walked out of the shop, fish and chips in my hand ready to enjoy by the sea, a seagull, which I think was part pterodactyl, flew down, pecked at me, then grabbed hold of my fish and flew away. Greedy thing didn't leave anything.

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

Not too many yet, although I have been asked what size the single beds are. Apparently, they come in two sizes.



How many of Uniworld's ships have you sailed on?

I haven't sailed on any of the Uniworld fleet yet, however I have just returned from our global sales meeting where I stayed on Antoinette and spent time on River Duchess, River Queen, River Empress, River Ambassador and River Princess.

Which is your favourite on-board restaurant?

Every restaurant on every ship is just exquisite. I was lucky enough to spend some time with the chefs in March and they really are exceptional. I recently sampled a tastings menu on our new ship Joie De Vivre, and the food was out of this world.



Which port would you always disembark in?

Vienna, the city is just stunning, every building and winding street just gets better. The cakes are just amazing. It's also home to some of the best musicians and artists the world has ever known, including Mozart, Strauss and Beethoven. If you get time, you have to see the Lipizzaner horses perform at the Spanish Riding School.

And which port would you opt to stay on board – and why?

There isn't anywhere I would choose to stay on board, everywhere has something new and different to offer and you just need to explore and listen to the experts. The next port you visit may become your favourite destination.

Which cruise is on your bucket list?

It has to be India. We have an amazing itinerary that starts in New Delhi on a tour, then goes to Jaipur and Agra to see the Taj Mahal. The exciting part is we have a seven-night voyage along the Ganges starting in Kolkata where you get to see some incredible sights and meet amazing people.

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

I have absolutely fallen in love with the industry, so hopefully that never happens. But if I didn't, I'd like to work in sport maybe as a coach for aspiring rugby players.

If you could name a ship, what would you call it?

Well seeing as Boaty McBoatface is taken, how about the McDonald, in honour of Jane after she had such an amazing time on the Maria Theresa?



NEW multi-award winning cruises to Cuba and the Caribbean

WIN!

A cruise to Cuba and
earn Love2Shop
vouchers

Voyages to Antiquity have recently launched a brand-new season of small-ship cruises sailing across the Caribbean, south-east Mexico, vibrant Cuba, Jamaica and smaller islands. Drawing inspiration from Carrie Gibson's epic history book *'Empire's Crossroads'*, we offer a historical and cultural experience like no other.



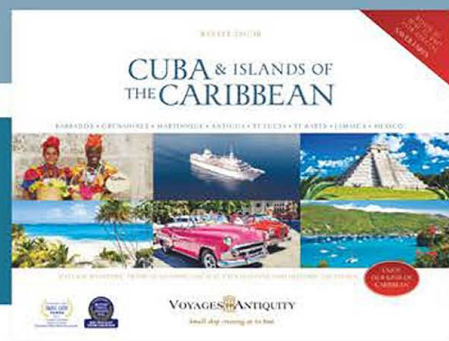
ONLINE TRAINING AT *vtaexpert.com*

Visit *vtaexpert.com* to learn more about Voyages to Antiquity and our exceptional small-ship cruising.



Register and complete the simple training programme to earn Love2Shop vouchers and a chance to win a cruise to Cuba!

To find out more and to request our new brochure, visit our dedicated website for trade partners *vtaexpert.com*



VOYAGES ANTIQUITY

Small-ship cruising at its best



DISCOVER OUR AMAZING RANGE OF CRUISING HOLIDAYS

RIVIERA
TRAVEL
RIVER CRUISES



EUROPEAN RIVER CRUISES

For the 2018 season Riviera Travel will be operating a fleet of 12 five-star and 1 four-star superior ships along the iconic rivers of Europe. Our river cruise program goes from strength to strength with more passengers from the UK now choosing Riviera Travel's European river cruises than any of our competitors. We are committed to expanding our fleet and our horizons and are delighted to announce the introduction of another brand new five-star ship for 2018, the MS Robert Burns. We will also be taking passengers on a brand new exciting journey from Budapest to the Black Sea.

NEW FOR 2018

- Another brand new five-star ship, the MS Robert Burns
- Brand new 14 night itinerary - **Budapest to the Black Sea - from just £2,299pp**
- Optional drinks package

Included with lunch and dinner:

Red, white and rose house wine and the wine recommendations from the menu,
draught beer, non-alcoholic beer, soft drinks and juices

4 nights - £59 7 nights - £99 14 nights - £199

Bulk supplies of our new Cruise Collection brochures are now available at www.trade-gate.co.uk. In addition to our new 2018 River Cruise itineraries they now include for the first time all of our Cruise Collection including...

Tall Ships | Mekong cruises | Ganges cruises | Transatlantics cruises | Mediterranean small ship cruises

Book online, or call: **01283 744370**

For agency sales support, email: agencysales@rivieratravel.co.uk

Riviera Travel booking terms and conditions apply. Prices correct as of 08.05.17



Making long-distance relationships profitable

New technology has changed the face of selling travel and **Zoltan Biczó**, Highly Commended Cruise Consultant of the Year at the Wave Awards, tells *Lesley Bellew* how he makes it work from his home in Hungary

Every week, the Ponders Travel team brainstorm over the phone or Skype to discuss what's going on in the business.

There's nothing unusual about that except Zoltan Biczó, who was Highly Commended Cruise Consultant of the Year at the 2017 Wave Awards, joins the conversation from Győr, in Hungary.

After more than a decade of working in the UK cruise industry, Zoltan returned to his homeland with his wife Szabina, son Belian, 11, and daughter Zsófia, nine, so they would be surrounded by family – but he found links with his 'family' of UK cruise industry friends hard to break.

Zoltan said: "When I returned to Hungary in 2014, I missed my UK travel trade friends and I was overwhelmed by the kind messages from my UK colleagues and trade partners, which prompted me to reconnect quickly."

"I had crossed paths with Clare Dudley, the managing director of Ponders Travel, when we both worked for Fred Olsen. Two years ago, I rang her and asked if there might be a chance to work with her – and the rest is history."

Since joining Ponders Travel, Zoltan has doubled sales with 50% repeat, 25% recommended and 25% new-to-cruise business. Some 70% of Zoltan's sales are for river cruises, and rather appropriately, his office in Győr, about an hour's drive from Budapest, overlooks a small tributary of the Danube. Of those river cruises, tailor-made packages account for 30% of the business.

Zoltan said: "I am connected to the head office 24/7 via the internet and IP phone system so I can contribute to our great team spirit. I love to create river cruises where every part of the voyage is tailor-made. I have recently been to Paris to pace out tours for a bespoke group cruise. I will not leave anything to chance, I want everything to be as authentic as it can be."

MD Clare Dudley says that through Zoltan, she truly has "a gem" in her team. "Zoltan is a bundle of joy; his name is well recognised in the industry. And his knowledge ensures that his clients return to him again and again."

"Zoltan often travels to the UK and remains connected with the trade network by attending webinars, meetings, travel shows and conferences. He is always looking at



"Zoltan is a bundle of joy; his name is well recognised in the industry. And his knowledge ensures that his clients return to him again and again."

ways in which he can not only tap into his local market, in Hungary, but how he can make this work for the whole of the Ponders brand, getting local companies to quote for him to save costs and sourcing everything from scratch with a boundless energy." 

Career

Zoltan has spent 17 years in the travel, tourism and hospitality industry. While studying economics at Szechenyi Istvan University and travel and tourism at Budapest Business School, he worked as a concierge and porter in a hotel in Budapest.

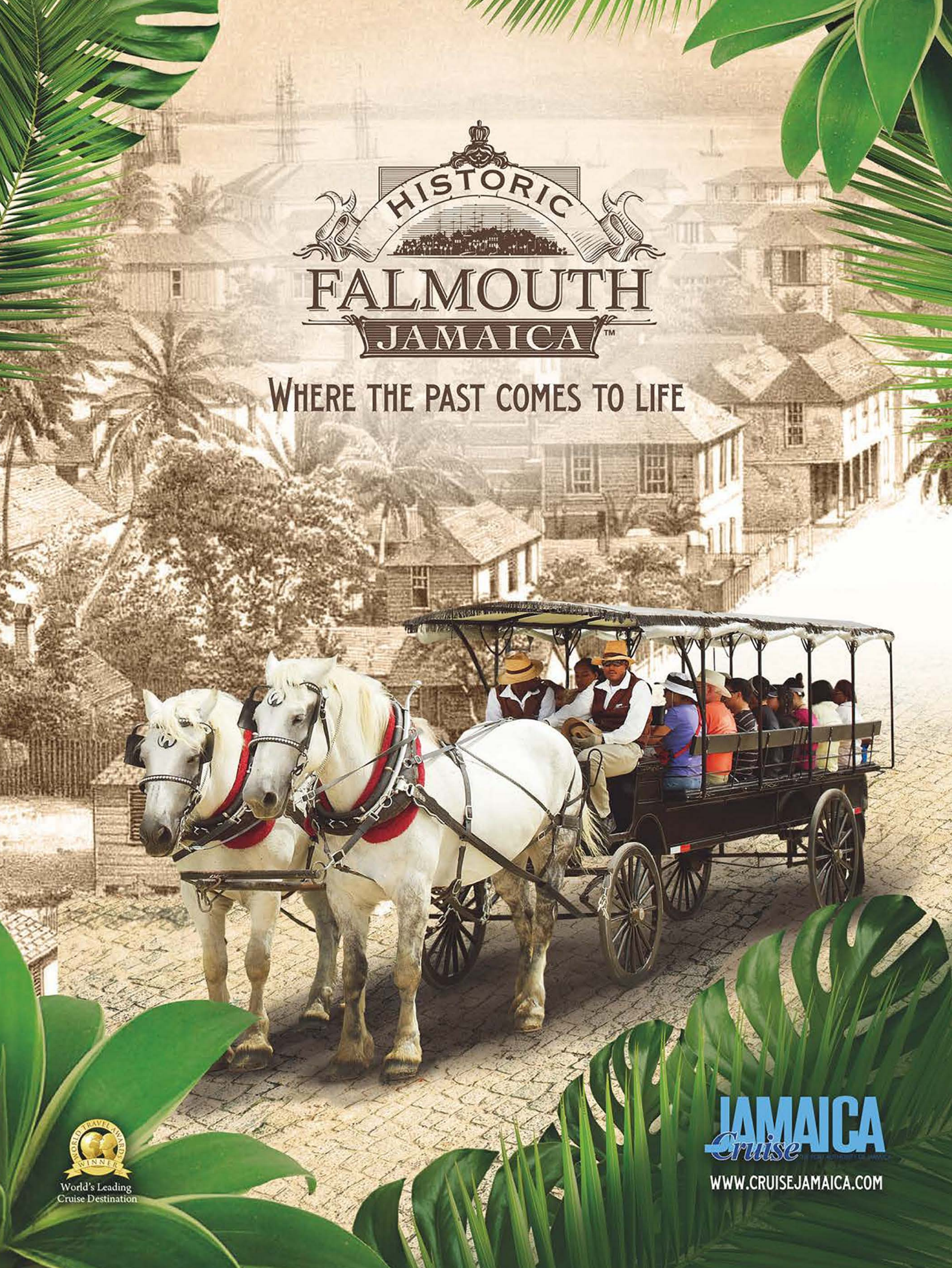
He has been a travel agent, selling cruises for 10 years with companies including Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, Star Clippers, AmaWaterways and Amadeus River Cruises.

Zoltan has travelled on European waterways and to the Baltic, the Mediterranean, Mexico and the Caribbean Islands.

His favourite cruise was on Star Clippers' Star Flyer around Costa Rica.

Zoltan's top tips

When selling a Danube cruise, I always recommend a pre- or post-voyage stay in Budapest, and I add a complimentary two-hour private walking tour to suit a client's specific interest such as architecture, history or hunting for antiques. And if they are into classical music, I arrange tickets to the Hungarian State Opera House.



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Making her mark



Lauren Burrill, brand manager at Royal Caribbean International, was the overall winner of the cruise line marketing category of Cruise Trade News' Rising Stars award. She talked to *Jane Archer* about her career.

When Derbyshire-born Lauren Burrill moved to London in 2004 to start an acting career, she never dreamed she would end up being crowned a Rising Star for her marketing skills at one of the world's largest cruise lines.

"Cruises weren't on my radar. I had all the misconceptions that other people have," she said. Nevertheless she went for an interview at Royal Caribbean International, was appointed to look after launches and special events, promoted to brand manager and is now on a mission to get the whole of the UK hooked on cruising.

Although acting was her love, Lauren decided she needed a "proper job" and moved into events marketing. From there she went to the luxury drinks brand Moët Hennessey, where she worked in sales. "I had a great time but it made me realise I liked creative marketing than sales."

As a confirmed wine lover, Lauren, 31, jokes she took the job at Royal Caribbean "for a healthier career"; in truth it was because the role was too exciting to pass up. It was 2013 and Royal Caribbean, Celebrity Cruises and Azamara Club Cruises were being split into separate businesses. Her role wasn't a clearly defined one so this was an opportunity to really make her mark.

Two years later, she moved from events to her current role as brand manager. "Michael Bayley, our president and CEO, challenged us to better identify who we are, what we do as a company and how to break through the myths about cruising. I sat in on workshops, realised this was what

really excited me and was offered the role of brand manager in June 2015."

It's a wide-ranging position that entails overseeing the cruise line's creative content including the images and tone of collateral used to communicate with consumers and agents. An ongoing project involves improving the customer journey from the point at which they consider a Royal Caribbean cruise to the moment they come home from their holiday.

"People typically book a cruise 30

She attributes much of her success to Stuart Leven, Royal Caribbean's vice-president EMEA and UK managing director, who joined the company a week before her and has provided great inspiration and support. "We share a belief that change is exciting," she said.

It is all a big leap from her training as an actor but Lauren has no regrets about the course her career has taken; she has thrown herself into each new role with gusto, and from having a vague idea that

"It's all a big leap from her training as an actor but Lauren has no regrets about the course her career has taken"

weeks before travel. That's a long time. I am looking at how to keep up their anticipation and excitement in that time."

Emails are one way but she believes people also enjoy receiving documents delivered to their door.

Lauren reckons it was the part she played in "delivering the extraordinary" during the launch of Harmony of the Seas last year that landed her the Rising Star nomination and the award itself. "Things move so quickly in this industry that we don't get the chance to stand back and say, 'I did that'. Winning was just amazing."

cruising probably wasn't for her, she is now one of its biggest advocates.

"I would love to think that is some small way I can help end the myths and misconceptions surrounding cruising."

She would also like to take some of her learnings to another part of the Royal Caribbean business, maybe in the US or China, and dreams of delivering a TED (technology, entertainment, design) talk. About cruising of course.

"It's on my bucket list. I guess that is my acting roots, the desire to play to an audience." 

at a glance...

MSC MERAVIGLIA

Fans of mega-ships don't have long to wait until the hugely anticipated launch of MSC Meraviglia in early June ahead of its inaugural season sailing the Mediterranean. With unique at-sea attractions and innovative smart technology to access cabins, book excursions, pay for items and even keep a track on the kids, it thoroughly deserves its name, which translates from Italian as 'wonder'. In fact, MSC has gone so far as to say its newest fleet addition is 'the eighth wonder of the world'. Here's why...



Pools and activities

Poolside space on MSC Meraviglia is among the most plentiful to be found at sea, with three pools for all passengers, plus a private pool for MSC Yacht Club guests.

The main, South Beach Miami-inspired pool is 25 metres long (deck 15); there's another at the back of the ship (deck 16) and a 10-metre indoor pool. Other attractions include Formula 1 virtual reality simulators, a water park with three twisting slides and splash pool, a Himalayan Bridge where guests can zipline across the ship; a sportplex, full-size bowling alley and 5D cinema.



Cirque de Soleil

For the first time at sea, there will be two shows, six nights a week, by the world-renowned Cirque de Soleil, in the custom-built Carousel Lounge. It can accommodate up to 450 guests, with an area for those who want to dine during the show.

There's another 1,000 sq metre theatre venue on the ship plus a multi-purpose karaoke bar, comedy club, TV studio bar and Attic nightclub.



Dining

Guests have a choice of 12 distinct dining venues and a wide range of bars and lounges. Highlights include the Eataly Ristorante Italiano, where passengers can explore, taste, buy and learn about the finest Italian-inspired Mediterranean cuisine and foods from experts. There's an American-style steakhouse; stylish teppanyaki restaurant and sushi restaurant. The Marketplace buffet restaurant (deck 15) is open 20 hours a day.



Family friendly

Facilities for families, children and teens are in one contained area, which includes a huge amusement park, family activity lounge, tech lab and clubs. Activities have been designed in partnership with Chicco for up to three-year-olds and LEGO for three-11-year-olds. There are separate teenagers' clubs for 12-14 and 15-17-year-olds and a teen-only area serving as a cinema, gaming room and disco, depending on the time of day.

FAST FACTS

315
metres long

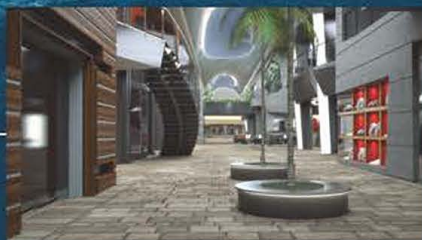
65
metres tall

19
decks

5,700
passengers

2,224
cabins

1: 2.4
crew-passenger
ratio



Promenade

The ship's two-deck indoor promenade, Galleria Meraviglia, is filled with areas for shopping, eating, relaxing and socialising. In the evening, it comes alive with music, parties and entertainment. The entire ceiling of the promenade is covered by a giant LED screen, an atmospheric digital sky that animates the whole area from above with inspiring vistas, events, sunrises, sunsets and starry night skies.



Accommodation

There is a choice of 10 different accommodation types, including interconnected 'cluster' cabins suitable for guests in large groups and duplex rooms on two floors, with balconies and private whirlpools. Quadruple cabins can each accommodate a family of four, with daytime living space and a sofa bed. MSC Yacht Club guests stay in one of 78 suites, 15 inside cabins and two apartments, all with 24-hour butler service and access to a private lounge and pool (deck 19), plus a lift to the exclusive Yacht Club area of the spa.

Who are the new kids on the block?

Growth in the cruise industry shows no signs of abating with cruiselines queuing up to get their orders into the shipyards of Europe. *Angela Cronin* finds out what the industry has to look forward to over the next few years



HAL's Nieuw Statendam

MSC CRUISES

No sooner will MSC Cruises be putting the finishing touches to the launch of MSC Meraviglia, when the cruise line will be gearing up for the arrival of the next addition to the MSC fleet.

MSC Seaside is the first of a new generation of cruise ships, which has a design that is inspired by elegant beach-view apartments.

Every element of the ship aims to bring guests closer to the sea with design features such as a 360° ocean level promenade, panoramic glass lifts and a 30-metre bridge on the top deck.

Accommodation includes aft corner suites, modular cabins designed for families and groups of up to 10 people and exclusive balcony cabins with a private terrace overlooking the promenade. Also, 76% of the cabins are on the outside of the ship.

MSC Seaside launches towards the end of this year and will homeport in Miami.

Meanwhile, sister ship, MSC Seaview, is set to enter service next spring in the Mediterranean, while there is an option on a third Seaside class ship.

msccruises.co.uk

HOLLAND AMERICA LINE

With Koningsdam just completing its first full year of cruising, construction has begun

on sister ship Nieuw Statendam, the second Pinnacle Class vessel for HAL. Due for delivery in November 2018, HAL president Orlando Ashford said: "With Pinnacle Class we have been able to try new things, and while Nieuw Statendam is a sister to Koningsdam, we do have some new ideas that will be revealed in time."

So watch this space...

hollandamerica.com

SEABOURN

Seabourn has started taking bookings for the maiden season of new ship Seabourn Ovation, which launches in spring next year, with a variety of voyages in Europe between May and November.

Ovation will be the second ship in the Odyssey-class category with sister ship Encore launching earlier this year.

Like of all the ships in the Seabourn family, the design of Ovation is all about creating the luxury yacht feel.

With room for just 600 passengers, the line's high ratio of space per guest and personalised service for each guest remains Seabourn's USP.

Like Encore, Ovation will be configured with one additional deck and new expanded public areas. Every suite will feature a private veranda.

seabourn.com

ROYAL CARIBBEAN INTERNATIONAL

The giant US cruise line is no shrinking violet when it comes to big ship launches. Harmony of the Seas, which set sail last year, claimed the accolade of the world's largest ship, a title it will only hold for a short time as hot on the heels of the 2016 launch is the April 2018 unveiling of Oasis class sister ship Symphony of the Seas.

Carrying 5,494 guests at double occupancy (Harmony carries 5,479) and equipped with 2,775 guest rooms (28 more than Harmony), the 18-deck Symphony will be the world's largest ships.

Like Harmony, Symphony will have distinct neighbourhoods, such as the tree-lined Central Park and the Royal Promenade, the Ultimate Abyss waterslide, a trio of alternative waterslides; and Splashaway Bay kids waterpark. In addition, a second pool will be added to the solarium on deck 15, meaning more space for adults to relax in.

Symphony will sail its maiden season around the Mediterranean.

Other new ships on the Royal Caribbean launch list are: two Quantum-class ships in 2019 and 2020; a fifth Oasis ship in 2021; the first Icon-class ship in 2022; and the second Icon-class ship in 2024.

royalcaribbean.co.uk ⚓

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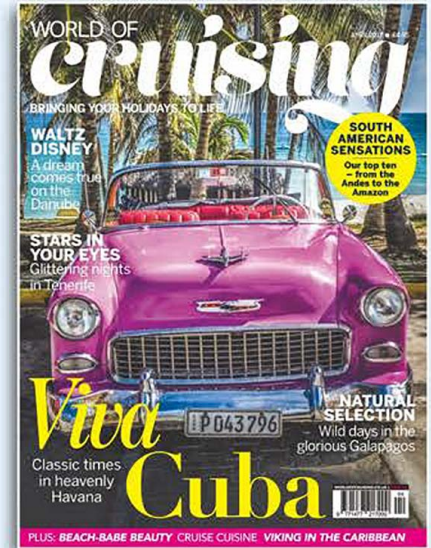
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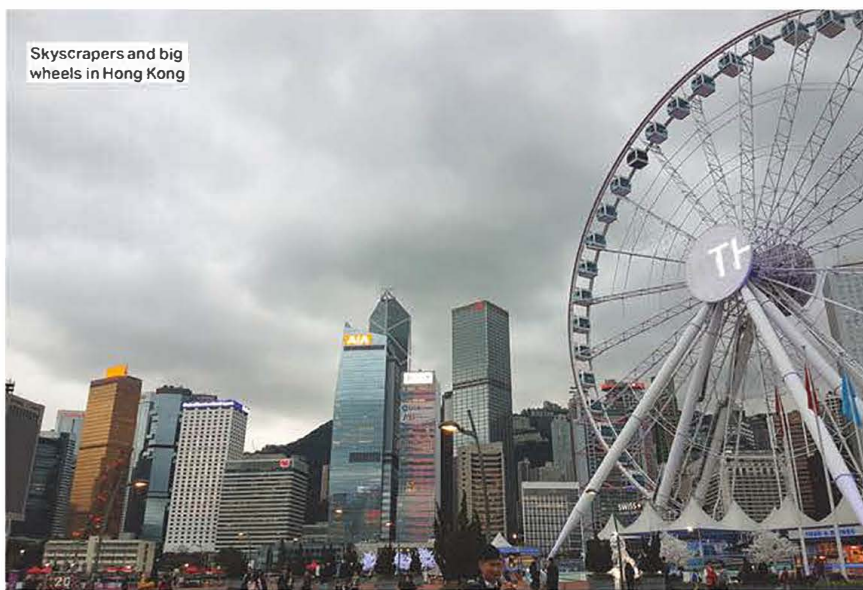
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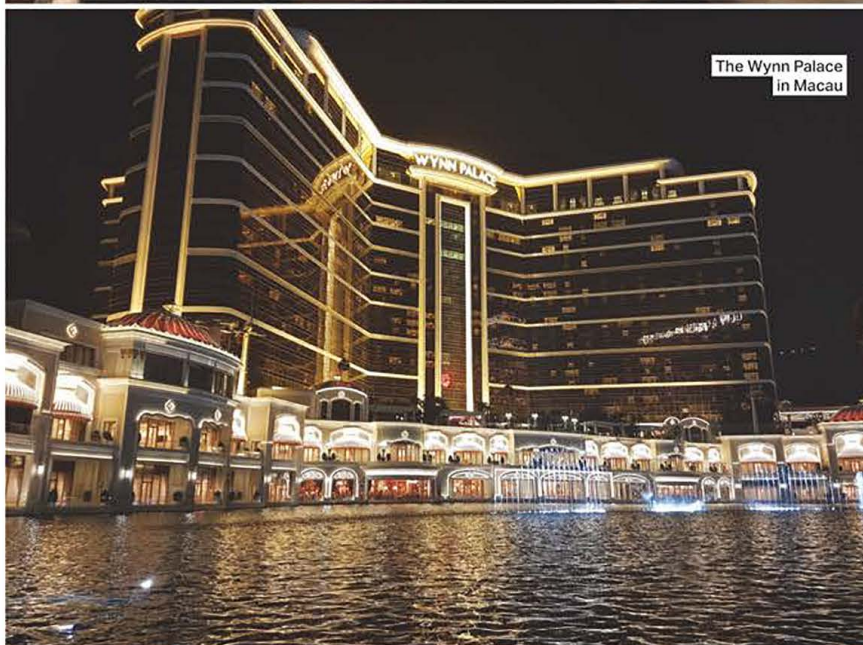
Royal Caribbean International took 14 travel agents on a five-night trip to Hong Kong and Macau where they visited all of the must-see sights, enjoyed some fine dining experiences, got a taste of the nightlife and some even enjoyed a bit of bungee jumping



Skyscrapers and big wheels in Hong Kong



Agents tuck into some tasty dishes at the Beijing Kitchen at the Grand Hyatt in Macau



The Wynn Palace in Macau



Trying to stay dry on an open-bus tour of Hong Kong



Preparing to bungee jump from the Macau Tower



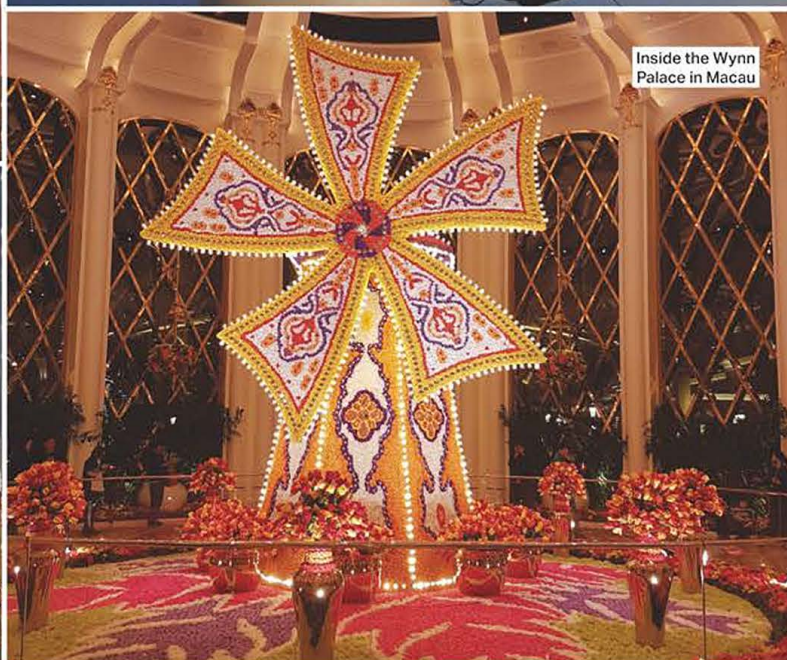
The Grand Hall in the Venetian Macau



Cruise Trade News' very own Marine Matringe taking in the views of Macau during her bungee jump



Views of Hong Kong from Victoria Bay



Inside the Wynn Palace in Macau

BY ROYAL APPROVAL

INCREDIBLE VIEWS, A UNIQUE CULTURAL EXPERIENCE, LUXURY HOTELS, SUN, SEA, DANCING, DINING AND DIVING OFF A SKYSCRAPER — ALL IN ONE TRIP? IMPOSSIBLE, SURELY? NOT IF YOU'RE ONE OF THE AGENTS TO WIN A PLACE ON A ROYAL CARIBBEAN TRIP TO HONG KONG AND MACAU.

BY MARINE MATRINGE



Cruiselines know how effective incentives with fantastic reward prizes are in helping agents to sell their voyages.

Royal Caribbean International has a very popular agent incentive programme called Club Royal where agents are given financial rewards for every booking they make as well as being offered the opportunity to take part in competitions to win places on once-in-a-lifetime trips that the cruise line runs.

I was lucky enough to join 14 travel agents from the UK and Ireland who had all won places on a five-night incentive trip to Hong Kong and Macau after they took part in a Ride the Wave incentive last year.

Our trip began with two nights at the Harbour Grand Hong Kong Hotel, which is the most luxurious place I have ever stayed in, particularly as my bedroom had clear views of Hong Kong harbour. I was blown away by my panoramic vista and thought "I want to stay here forever".

After checking into the Harbour Grand and exploring our rooms, we all headed straight out for dinner to Hutong, an award-winning northern Chinese restaurant, which actually has a sister restaurant in the Shard in London.

Based in the Kowloon district, the restaurant boasts breathtaking views of the ultra-modern Hong Kong skyline with a menu that serves up real Chinese dishes

such as spicy pork belly, steamed cod with green peppercorn and wok-fried chicken with Sichuan dried chilli. Not a crumb of prawn toast in sight.

After dinner, we went out to explore the nightlife of Hong Kong before rounding off our amazing evening at the hotel bar.

Breakfast the following morning was another sumptuous affair served up in the hotel's very modern restaurant with a stunning view of the emerald-green swimming pool and the harbour in front of us.

It was a great start to our day, which had a busy itinerary starting with a minibus ride to Victoria Peak, the highest point in Hong Kong, for views of the skyscraper-studded skyline and the busy harbour. >

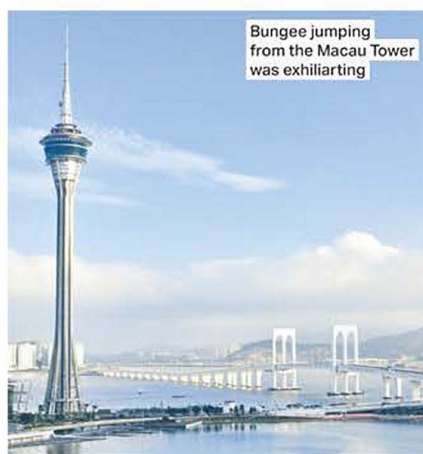


While we descended the peak by minibus, ascending it was a whole different experience as we jumped on the Peak Tram funicular railway, which was built in 1888. The journey down the hill takes only five minutes and offers a great view over Hong Kong – and it's a pretty steep ascent.

Back down in the heart of Hong Kong, it was time to enjoy a tour on an open-top bus. I had never been a big fan of them in the past but despite a heavy rainfall while we were on the top of the bus – I lasted 10 minutes before heading down to a dry seat on the lower deck – I did really enjoy seeing the island's sights.

Next up on our itinerary was a trip to the Aberdeen fishing village for some sightseeing on a sampan. The village is populated by traditional fishermen, who still live on their boats.

Our guide Albert said that the current generation will be the last of the boat people, as they are called in Hong Kong. The total population of boat dwellers in Hong Kong



Bungee jumping from the Macau Tower was exhilarating

“It's safe to say the jump only lasts a few seconds with just enough time to enjoy the view. It's certainly an experience I will remember for the rest of my life”

was estimated at 150,000 in 1963; today, it is 6,000.

Back on dry land, we discovered the famous Stanley beach — and it didn't feel like we were in Hong Kong any more. Stanley beach is peaceful, and its charming seaside with cafés and restaurants reminded me of the French Riviera.

On our second night in Hong Kong, the tourist board treated us to a 45-minute cruise across Hong Kong's Victoria Harbour on Aqua Luna, one of the last remaining red-sail Chinese junk boats, followed by a meal at the tapas restaurant, Fofó by el Willy, and a night out in the bars and clubs of the trendy Lan Kwai Fong and Soho districts, which are popular with expats.

The next day started early as we said our goodbyes to Hong Kong and took a one-hour ferry ride to Macau, the Las Vegas of the east, where we found ourselves wandering around St Mark's Square in Venice with views of the Eiffel Tower. Who knew that travelling the world was that easy?



Venice recreated in the heart of Macau

Macau clearly takes its inspiration from Vegas's attempt to recreate the legendary cities of the world all in one place.

Our home for the next two nights was the Hard Rock Hotel, and my suite, which looked more like a decent-sized London apartment, was on the Dolly Parton floor.

Club Royal had lined up a huge surprise for the adrenaline junkies in our group; the chance to do the world's highest bungee jump from the 383-metre-high Macau Tower.

Only six of my group accepted the challenge – and I was one of them. And it's safe to say the jump only lasts a few seconds with just enough time to enjoy the view. It's certainly an experience I will remember for the rest of my life.

On our first night in Macau, we dined at the Beijing Kitchen, the signature restaurant of the Hyatt hotel. The traditional Beijing Style Duck and the hand-pulled noodles were simply delicious.

After dinner, we went to the Wynn Palace to see the mightily impressive fountain

show at the hotel before heading to Club Cubic, one of the city's biggest dance venues. The following day, we relaxed by the hotel pool before our trip to the theatre in the evening to see The House of Dancing Waters, a show to rival Cirque du Soleil.

For our final day on our incredible adventure, we returned to Hong Kong to explore Stanley Market, which was a great place to pick up silk outfits, porcelain chopsticks, and jade bracelets.

And for our last treat, Club Royal had organised the perfect activity to cheer everyone up: we went to Ocean Park, a big theme park located on the top of a hill and offering a beautiful view over Stanley beach.

It's the only place in Hong Kong where you can see pandas. Well, most days. The Panda Adventure was closed during our visit – but nobody seemed to mind. After all, thanks to Club Royal, we had had the most extraordinary time. It's a bit of a cliché to talk about the trip of a lifetime, but if any trip ever deserved that title, it was this one. ⚓

CLUB ROYAL – THE LOWDOWN

What is Club Royal?

It's an award-winning, agent incentive programme launched by Royal Caribbean two years ago. The club now has 12,000 members.

The benefits:

There are three levels of memberships: blue, gold and platinum with benefits including between £5 and £7.50 commission on every bookings, holiday cashback and access to all Club Royal Benefits such as 15% off Red Letter Day discounts.

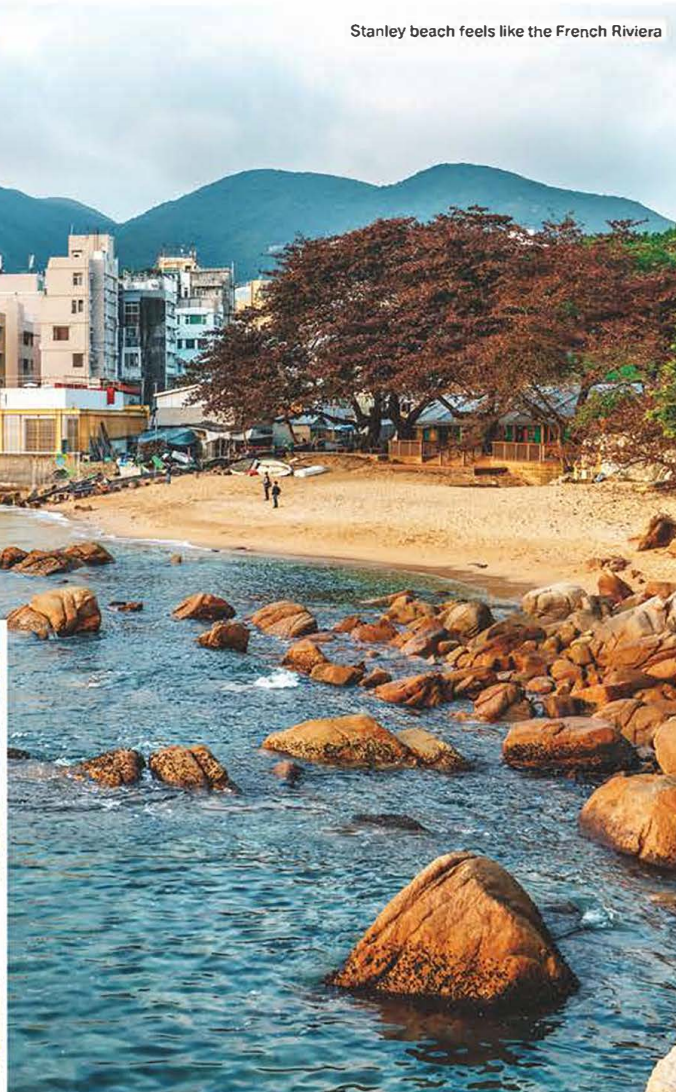
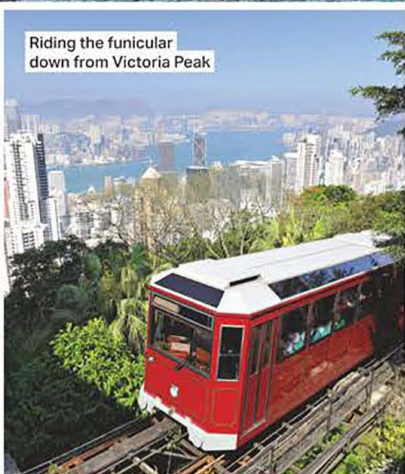
Upcoming opportunities:

Club Royal is currently holding a competition offering members the chance to win one of 10 places to attend this year's CLIA Cruise Conference as part of a new competition. The lucky agents will receive free entry to the three-day CLIA Cruise Conference including the exclusive evening gala dinner, with luxury accommodation at a Southampton hotel. Royal Caribbean branded kit and food and drink throughout the trip will also be covered, including a welcome dinner on the first evening. As part of the conference, agents will have the opportunity to visit a number of cruise ships in the port of Southampton, including two of Royal Caribbean's, Independence of the Seas and Navigator of the Seas.

myclubroyal.co.uk

Stanley beach feels like the French Riviera

Riding the funicular down from Victoria Peak



CHILDREN'S CLUBS

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1. DISNEY CRUISE LINE MAGICAL MOMENTS

Youngsters can meet Mickey and friends closer to home next year when **Disney Magic** sets sail on its first British Isles cruise on 2 September visiting Cork, Dublin, Greenock (Glasgow and Edinburgh) and Liverpool. All of the cruise line's ships are packed with family fun from bow to stern, including hit shows such as the recently premiered *Tangled: The Musical* and the *Marvel's Avengers Academy*, which uses dazzling technology to transform youngsters into their favourite superheroes.

0800 171 2317 disneycruise.com



2. ROYAL CARIBBEAN INTERNATIONAL BIG CHOICE

The Adventure Ocean programme offers some of the largest kids' clubs at sea, plus after-hours nursery care and adult-only enclaves so parents can enjoy some grown-up time, while their children play or sleep. There will be plenty of more large-scale thrills in store next year when the 5,494-passenger **Symphony of the Seas**, the world's biggest cruise ship, launches in April and at 10 storeys high, it will feature the tallest slide at sea. The ship will spend its maiden season in the Mediterranean.

0844 493 4005 royalcaribbean.co.uk

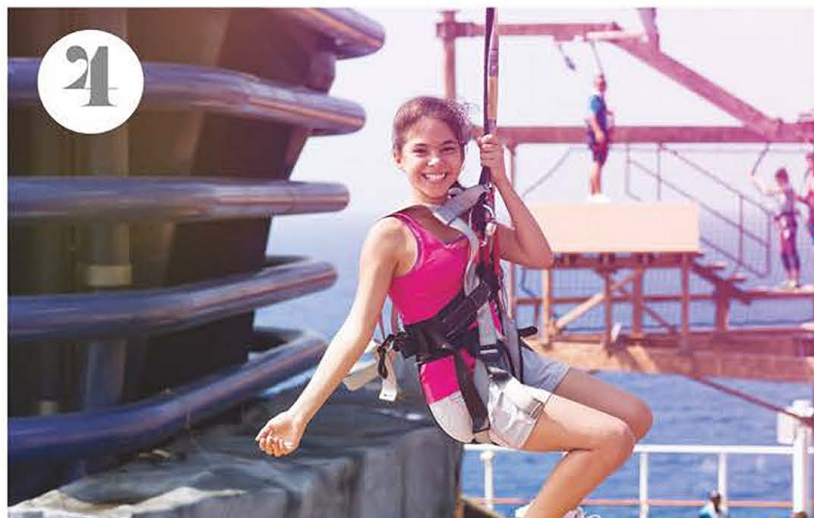


3. P&O CRUISES

CREATIVE COOKING

Young chefs can cook up at treat in the new hands-on cookery classes on flagship **Britannia**, which include baking for under-eights, bread making for nine to 12-year-olds and pasta making for teens, plus family classes. P&O's sailings from Southampton are geared to Brits and include mini cruises that are a fantastic introduction for first-timers dipping their toes into life at sea. There are four age-appropriate kids' clubs on board, family pools, a sun deck and pool for teens and a sports arena.

0843 373 0111 pocruires.com



4. NORWEGIAN CRUISE LINE

MAKE A SPLASH

Norwegian Escape boasts the biggest aqua park at sea, a plank extending 8ft over the side of the ship and a dedicated area for smaller children. The Splash Academy is next to the family-friendly oceanview cabins and, in a first for the line, Escape has a nursery for youngsters aged six months to three years. The ship also has a big Sports Complex so kids can play a whole range of sports as well as tackle a high ropes course, bounce around on a bungee trampoline or climb a rock wall in the middle of the sea.

0333 241 2319 ncl.co.uk



5. CARNIVAL

HAPPY CAMPERS

Children can pitch up at Camp Ocean, which recreates the fun and games of a summer camp, while families can pit their skills in front of a live audience in Hasbro, the Game Show. The line's newest and largest ship **Carnival Vista**, has the Family Harbour zone, which features amazing attractions including SkyRide, a suspended open-air cycling experience, and the first IMAX on a ship. Carnival Vista also has an impressive water park with a wide choice of slides for thrill seekers.

0843 374 2272 carnival.co.uk



6. UNIWORLD

TAKE ME TO THE RIVER

Uniwold was one of the first river cruise lines to launch dedicated family cruises. This year, the **Generations programme** features nine multigenerational journeys with activities such as scavenger hunts, castle walks, Segway rides, kayaking and paddleboarding, pretzel and pasta-making workshops and even rowing a gondola in Venice. New for this year is the 10-day Rhine-Main Discovery cruise, which includes a visit to fairytale Neuschwanstein Castle.

0808 168 9110 uniworld.com

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To claim your vouchers, simply email incentives@saga.co.uk with booking details. Applicable to bookings confirmed May 1-31, 2017. Vouchers will be sent by email from Red letter days, please allow 4 weeks for delivery. [†]Private chauffeur service up to 75 miles each way or shared chauffeur service from 76-250 miles. Please ask for further details. All fares based on the lowest available Inside cabin, correct at time of going to print and subject to availability and change. [^]The Saga Satisfaction Guarantee is available to guests that have not previously cruised aboard any Saga ship. Terms and conditions apply, see Saga's brochure or website for details. Saga's holidays and cruises are exclusively for the over 50s (but a travelling companion can be 40+). **NHA-SC5896.**



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PARADISE FOUND

BY JANE ARCHER

STAR CLIPPERS' NEW CRUISES IN THAILAND PROVE TO BE THE ULTIMATE SUN, SEA AND SAND GETAWAY



The Star Clipper's crew

The haunting strains of Vangelis's 1492: Conquest of Paradise fill the night sky, ropes creak, acres of canvas inch their way up the tall masts and Star Clipper slips away from her anchorage in Patong Bay in the island of Phuket. My sailing adventure off the coast of Thailand has begun.

I use the term 'sailing' advisedly. All ships sail, but Star Clipper is the real deal.

One of three ships owned by the operator, it has four masts, 36,000 square feet of canvas and our captain is under instructions to sail whenever possible. And he does. On this new island-hopping cruise in Asia, if we are moving, we are sailing.

Each morning, I join Peter, the cruise director, on the open deck for story time, when he shows us our location on the ship's charts and talks about the day's events, local culture, history and navigational secrets.

I learn we are just south of Myanmar, that sea gypsies live nearby, that Star Clipper can reach 17 knots if the wind is favourable – "that's faster than an engine but not fun!" – and that the black ball on the rigging tells other ships we are at anchor.

Come the evening, Peter has talks on everything from the history of the Star Clipper ships to pirates. He hosts a fun quiz and a fashion show, which basically involves the sports team modelling garments from the on-board shop to drum up sales. And that, along with Charly on the keyboard, is the entertainment. This is not a cruise for clients who crave dressy evenings – shorts at dinner is fine – or song-and-dance shows.

First stop is Ko Surin – Ko is Thai for island – where some are going snorkelling, while I join those heading to the beach. As Star Clipper is at anchor, that necessitates climbing down a wobbly ladder into a tender. At the beach, we have to clamber down

another ladder into fairly deep water. And of course it's the same process in reverse to get back on board.

This is the procedure at every island bar one so not only is a good degree of mobility needed to get ashore, but you're advised to take as little as possible. Clothes dry out if you slip in the water; iPhones and cameras do not.

Ko Surin is a pretty place with a lovely beach and clear blue water that the snorkellers tell me is teeming with marine life. Ko Similan, which we visit the following day, is equally picturesque and excellent for divers.

Next day, we arrive at Ko Rok Nok, also known as Bird Island, a beautiful spot – or it would have been if hadn't chosen that day to rain. Luckily the clouds disappeared for our day in Langkawi, an island one hour by ferry off the coast of Malaysia.

This is the only time during the cruise that Star Clipper docks. I was going on a round-island excursion (£90 per person) that took us in search of wild sea eagles in Kilim Karst Geoforest Park and on one of the steepest cable cars in the world to the top of Mount Machinchang, some 2,322 feet above sea level. Not ideal for those with vertigo.

We set sail again at 5.30pm, bound for Ko Kradan,

where the crew set up a lunch barbecue on the beach. This is my favourite island – and not because of my burger and beer lunch. The sun is shining, the water is beautiful. Just heavenly.

But it has stiff competition because next day we are in Phang Nga Bay, an area littered with scenic limestone karsts – think Halong Bay in Vietnam. Not only that, but we're going out in the Zodiacs so we can see the ship in full sail.

I'm in a Zodiac with Peter, zigzagging between the karsts, learning about the people who collect birds' nests from caves here to sell in China – dangerous work but the reward is about \$2,000 for 1kg – and circling around Star Clipper.

A speedboat excursion that afternoon visits James Bond Island, where *The Man with the Golden Gun* was filmed. I've been before so I stay on board, soaking up some last rays of sun before we disembark tomorrow. The adventure is over but I know the fabulous memories will never fade.

Sample package: A seven-night Northern cruise round-trip from Phuket leads in at £1,325 per person departing on November 4, excluding flights.

starclippers.co.uk ⚓

"Our captain is under instructions to sail whenever possible. And he does. On this new island-hopping cruise in Asia, if we are moving, we are sailing"



FROM PARADES

SOUTH AMERICA AND ANTARCTIC CRUISES MAY NOT BE ON EVERYONE'S LIST, BUT THAT'S PART OF THE ATTRACTION FOR THOSE WHO YEARN TO HEAD SOUTH.

BY LISA JAMES



Magdalena Island, Chile

TO PENGUINS

Whether it's a die-hard cruise fan that's exhausted the more accessible options such as the Mediterranean or the Caribbean, an adventurous wildlife enthusiast or someone looking for the experience of a lifetime, a cruise taking in South America and/or the Antarctic would be a good suggestion.

Travelling by ship has to be one of the best ways to see South America in all its splendour, enabling passengers to experience enchanting capital cities, rugged coastlines, stunning scenery, natural wonders and plenty of history.

Time it right and the ship will arrive in Rio during Carnival and may even stay in port for a night or two so guests can experience the occasion in all its heady glory. Not to be outdone, Rio's great rival Buenos Aires is just as enticing.

Depending on the itinerary, passengers could be cruising glacial rivers in Chile, heading deep into the Amazon Rainforest, taking an excursion to Machu Picchu, swimming with turtles in the Galapagos Islands or heading towards Antarctica.

An Antarctic voyage takes the sense of adventure a step further, following the

journeys of explorers gone by, from the Land of Fire (Tierra del Fuego) to a world of ice.

Here, no two cruise adventures are ever the same – exact itineraries often depend on the time of year, local conditions and wherever the captain decides to drop anchor.

With world-renowned experts accompanying the cruises, passengers can learn more about the area's history and nature – or get professional tips from a photographer or painter on how to best capture each moment.

A DROP IN THE OCEAN

Oceanographer and environmentalist Jean-Michel Cousteau is the guest speaker on Crystal Cruises' 24-night Amazon Escape round trip on Crystal Serenity departing Fort Lauderdale on October 27. Highlights include French Guiana, Alter de Chao, Parintins, Boca de Valeria, Santarem, Macapa and an overnight port at Manaus. Cruise-only prices start at £4,322pp. crystalcruises.co.uk

PICK UP A PENGUIN

A visit to Magdalena Island, home to the Magellanic penguin colony, is one of the many highlights of a five-night Gauchos, Penguins and Glaciers land and sea expedition with Australis. The cruise element, on board Stella Australis, also takes in Glacier Alley, the Beagle Channel and Cape Horn. The trip is available from April to September. Prices start at \$3,657pp. australis.com

FALKLANDS TO FJORDS

Holland America Line has a 22-night South America and Antarctic voyage from Santiago in Chile to Buenos Aires in Argentina on board Zaandam on December 15, including a cruise along the Chilean Fjords, port calls at the Falkland Islands and Montevideo in Uruguay, as well as four days cruising the Antarctic. Cruise-only prices start at £3,599pp. hollandamerica.com

SAFARI ON ICE

A 13-day round-trip guided wildlife safari from Ushuaia exploring Antarctica with Natural World Safaris departs on November 17, on board the fully stabilised ship Akademik Ioffe, sailing the Beagle Channel, the Drake Passage, the South Shetland Islands and Antarctic Peninsula. The trip costs £6,500pp, excluding flights. naturalworldsafaris.com



REMOTE CONNECTION

A nine-night Galapagos cruise from Tauck on board the 40-passenger ship *Isabela II* allows guests to get up close to blue-footed boobies, sea lions, iguanas and other wildlife. The itinerary is flexible, allowing the ship to access many remote islands, accompanied by expert naturalists. Prices start at £4,580pp, with various departure dates in 2018. tauck.co.uk

DANCING IN THE STREET

Fred Olsen's 46-night Rio Carnival and River Plate cruise departs Southampton on January 23 next year, stopping at various ports in the Mediterranean before arriving in Rio de Janeiro in time for carnival. The ship docks in Rio for three nights, before setting sail for Uruguay and Buenos Aires, where it is in port for one night. Prices start at £3,999pp. fredolsencruises.com

AMAZON ADVENTURES

Jean-Michel Cousteau pops up again, this time on a new itinerary on selected dates in February and October 2018 with boutique operator Aqua Expeditions. The seven-night adventure on board *Aria Amazon* from Iquitos in Brazil travels the mighty Amazon River, passing songbirds, hawks and pink river dolphins. Prices start at £6,822pp. aquaexpeditions.com

2-FOR-1 PACKAGES

Cruise and Maritime Voyages has a two-for-one offer on its 42-night Amazon, West Indies and Azores round-trip on board *Magellan*, from Tilbury on January 7 2018. Highlights include the Boi Bumba show in Parintins, Manaus, then Santarém, in the midst of the Amazonian jungle. Including the offer, the price leads in at £2,789pp. cruiseandmaritime.com 

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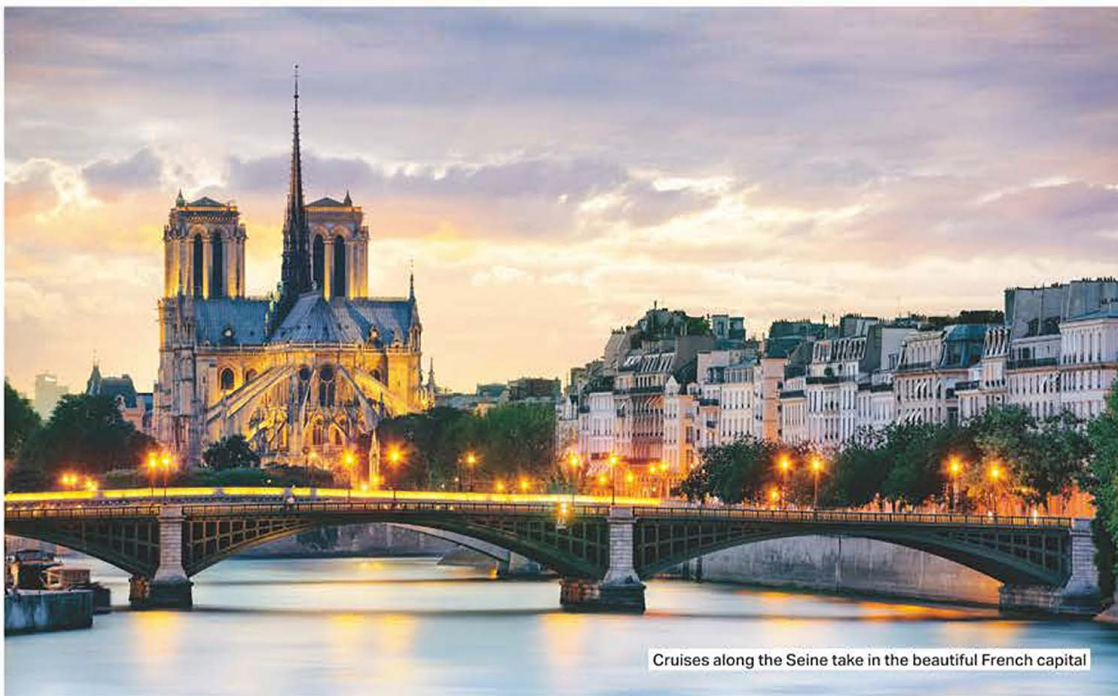
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BANKING ON

EUROPE'S GROWING RIVER CRUISE MARKET OFFERS A WEALTH OF SIGHTS AND EXPERIENCES FOR FIRST-TIMERS

BY JEANNINE WILLIAMSON



Cruises along the Seine take in the beautiful French capital



Seeing the sights a different way with EmeraldActive tours

From dazzling Dutch tulip fields to Germany's colourful Christmas markets, from the famous blue Danube to lesser-known Elbe, Europe's many waterways provide a wonderful way to explore the continent.

CLIA figures revealed an 11% rise in the number of UK passengers taking a river cruise last year with European destinations accounting for 87% of the market. To cater for the ever-growing demand, cruise lines are rolling out new ships and introducing more itineraries, which is helping to provide agents with even more sales opportunities.

The all-inclusive nature of river cruising is a big part of the appeal, according to Andy Harmer, CLIA UK and Ireland's vice-president of operations and director. "We have seen significant investment by companies in new, ships with greater amenities on board and a wide variety of excursions included in the package," he said.

Unlike ocean itineraries, there are new sights to see every day and stunning views to enjoy while sailing. The castle-lined Rhine and the Danube, taking in grand cities such as Vienna and Budapest, are the most popular rivers, however, every waterway has its own characteristics and agents can highlight the differences.

France's Rhone and Saône are fantastic for food and wine cruises, the Seine is big on sights and French-owned CroisiEurope has pioneered cruises on the shallow Loire with a vessel incorporating modern paddle-wheel technology.

Amadeus features the less-explored Lower Danube, rich in wildlife and flowing through Bulgaria and Slovakia, with the cruises being sold in the UK by Fred. River Cruises. The Moselle, which joins the Rhine at Koblenz, is a quieter river with Amadeus, AmaWaterways, A-Rosa, Avalon, CroisiEurope, Crystal, Emerald, Scenic, Uniworld and Viking featuring voyages on the Moselle. ➤

CREDIT: AMA WATERWAYS



A WINNER



SELL IT

AMADEUS RIVER CRUISES' 15-night Beautiful Blue Danube and Danube Delta itinerary, sailing through Germany, Austria, Hungary, Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania, starts at £2,191pp cruise-only departing on October 11, with full-board accommodation and wine with lunch and dinner.
0800 035 6411
amadeus-rivercruises.co.uk

CRYSTAL CRUISES has a fully-inclusive 13-night Jewels of the Rhine cruise from Amsterdam to Frankfurt from £3,820pp cruise-only departing on September 3, including all meals, drinks and excursions.
020 7399 7601
crystalcruises.co.uk

A-ROSA's four-night Danube Christmas Market round trip cruise from Engelhartszell to Vienna departing on November 25 leads in at £865pp, including all meals and drinks, flights from Gatwick and VIP home pick-up service (within 50 miles).
0800 440 2797
cosmostoursandcruises.co.uk



Wine tasting along the Danube



On-board cookery classes with AmaWaterways

CREDIT: AMA WATERWAYS

The Elbe, flowing from the Czech Republic into Germany includes the fascinating cities of Berlin and Prague, and both CroisiEurope and Viking offer itineraries along the Elbe, while Portugal's Douro has rugged green landscapes stretching from Porto to the Spanish border.

Mini taster cruises are perfect for first-timers, and usually themed around events such as springtime in Holland and festive markets. Most European itineraries are seven nights, however, many lines offer a 14-night Amsterdam to Basel cruise through four countries, while CroisiEurope has 19-night, multi-river cruises.

A big change in recent years has been the introduction of themed cruises, such as music, art, wine and golf, plus itineraries appealing to a broader market, including families and LGBT travellers. In 2018,

Uniworld enters previously uncharted waters with U by Uniworld, aimed at 21 to 45-year-olds, with its River Ambassador and Baroness ships being renamed A and B and completely refurbished to appeal to millennials.

UK managing director Kathryn Beadle said: "Cruises will have a lower price point and include two meals a day and a choice of drinks packages. The ships will have a funky design and feature mixologists and DJs."

In the past, river cruises mainly involved walking and coach tours, but now there are numerous options for active passengers. Emerald Waterways offers EmeraldACTIVE excursions and UK brand manager, David Winterton, said: "As European river cruising continues to grow in popularity, guests are increasingly looking for new and exciting ways to see the culture and sights of the cities they visit."



AmaLyra



Emerald Waterways has complimentary bikes for guests



Amsterdam features in many cruises



"As European river cruising continues to grow in popularity, guests are increasingly looking for new and exciting ways to see the culture and sights of the cities they visit."

CREDIT: EMERALD ACTIVE

CREDIT: UNIWORLD

"Since we set sail in 2014, we have provided a range of innovative features to keep guests active while on board such as a heated indoor pool, running track, gym and complimentary bicycles on all ships."

AmaWaterways introduced a wellness instructor this year to lead guided shore runs and on-board exercise classes on Amal.yra, which operates itineraries along the Seine, while Avalon features Active Discovery cruises with activities including kayaking and hiking.

Among the new ships to tempt clients are Uniworld's recently launched French-themed Joie de Vivre, Crystal's all-balcony Crystal Mahler and Crystal Bach, and CroisiEurope's Miguel Torga on the Douro.

Trade news includes A-Rosa teaming up with Cosmos Tours and Cruises to provide agents with a one-stop-shop booking process, while Titan

has developed partnerships with Scenic and AmaWaterways.

Titan also has exclusively chartered Serenade 1 for 2017 and 2018. Following the collapse of Diamond Shortbreak Holidays, Arena Travel stepped in to safeguard the affordable Brit-popular river cruise line.

And Viking's head of sales, Neil Barclay, summed it up in a nutshell when he highlighted why river has the edge over land-based escorted tours.

"You only have to unpack once as your accommodation travels with you," he said. "You're always assured consistent service and cuisine, and you usually dock in the heart of towns and cities, so the sights are on your doorstep. Rather than experiencing traffic jams, you are cruising along tranquil rivers, free to move around and enjoy a drink or a meal." ⚓



Cruises take in the rugged green landscapes of Portugal's River Douro

SALES TIPS

1

European river cruises offer flexible options of air, rail or coach travel.

2

Cruises range from three nights - ideal for first-timers - to 19 nights.

3

Highlight the wide range of inclusions - most lines offer transfers, excursions, wine with lunch and dinner and wifi in the price and some are all-inclusive with an open bar and tips included.

4

On a river ship, there are always great views each side and no sea days.

5

All staterooms are river-facing and there are no inside cabins.

CREDIT: VIKING



ANGKOR AWAY

BY DAVE MONK

FROM ANCIENT TEMPLES TO BUSTLING CITIES, A CRUISE ALONG THE MEKONG IS A COLOURFUL EXPERIENCE

Sailing along the Mekong, even in the height of luxury, is still a real adventure for travellers.

Although the 2,700-mile river flows through six countries, most cruise lines concentrate on just Vietnam and Cambodia where sights range from ancient temples, such as Angkor Wat, to the most bustling of modern cities including Ho Chi Minh City.

Guests who step outside the comfort of European rivers to explore the Mekong will be rewarded with a warm welcome, lasting memories and stunning sunsets. But they will also appreciate advice on what to pack, when to travel and what to expect.

In August, CroisiEurope is adding a fifth ship to its fleet on the river, the 60-passenger Indochine II, which will sail between Siem Reap in Cambodia and Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam. The company already offers a 10-night journey on the 48-guest Indochine. CroisiEurope says it is the only operator that allows guests to board the ship and stay

overnight in Ho Chi Minh City before visiting nine stops on the seven-night voyage to Angkor Wat for a two-night hotel stay in nearby Siem Reap. There, visitors can explore the temple complex and see where scenes from Tomb Raider were filmed.

Gabrielle Alam, head of UK sales for CroisiEurope, said: "The river flow can be extremely variable – unlike the controlled flow of European rivers – and so a journey along the Mekong should be treated as a bit of an adventure."

Uniworld is raising the luxury threshold this year with the launch of the 68-passenger, all-suite Mekong Navigator. Its design is inspired by the manor houses that once lined the streets of Old Saigon during the French colonial era.

Guests can soak up sunset views from the observation lounge, eat in Le Marché Restaurant and relax in La Vie Spa, while enjoying a 15-day voyage through Vietnam and Cambodia.

Scenic has teamed up with the ultra-luxurious Eastern and Oriental Express rail service for a 19-day journey from Ho Chi Minh City to Bangkok.

During the trip, guests enjoy a seven-day cruise on Scenic Spirit from Ho Chi Minh City to Siem Reap, an overnight stay at the Park Royal on Pickering in Singapore, two nights on the Eastern and Oriental Express from Singapore to Bangkok and an overnight stay in the Bangkok Shangri-La. Added extras include a visit to the Raffles Hotel Le Royal in Phnom Penh for a spot of high tea prepared in front of guests by the hotel's chefs.

AmaWaterways has a 16-night journey starting in the Vietnamese capital Hanoi with an overnight on a wooden junk in the beautiful Halong Bay before flying to Siem Reap for three days exploring the temples of Angkor Wat. Guests then embark on a Mekong cruise ending with a two-night stay in Ho Chi Minh City.

Jamie Loizou, sales, marketing and digital >

SALES TIPS

1

Look at summer departures for great deals.

2

Book early as popular ships such as Scenic's Spirit, which has just 44 balcony suites, sell quickly.

3

Compare the value against land-based tours. A Scenic cruise includes all flights, dining, drinks, touring and tips.

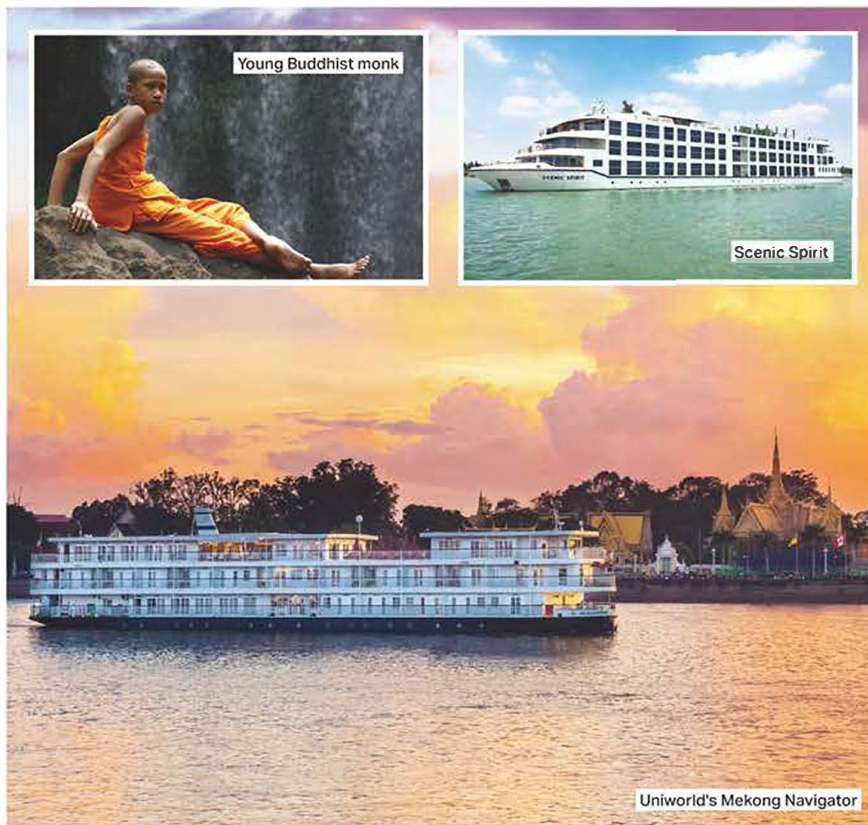
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Because of Scenic's all-inclusive promise, agents' commission is on a higher average sales value.

5

The exotic itineraries are a perfect route into selling more European river cruises.

Dawn Quinn, acting national sales manager, Scenic



director of AmaWaterways, said: "The best time to travel on the Mekong is during the November-to-January dry season. The rainy season runs from May to October, although the rain never lasts too long and the sun is rarely too hot.

"Guests should check the consulate for the most up-to-date visa information for the countries they're visiting. Also, depending on the passengers' health history, doctors may recommend malaria pills or certain booster shots. Anti-diarrhoea medicine may also be advised in case guests are sensitive to certain spices or unfamiliar ingredients commonly used in Southeast Asia."

In terms of what to pack, Loizou said: "Vietnam and Cambodia are tropical countries with hot and humid weather. Guests should bring lightweight, easy-care clothing that includes: some long-sleeved items for protection from mosquitoes and sun, raingear and sturdy, comfortable walking boots. Pack a few smart, casual items to wear at welcome and farewell dinners."

Among its range of itineraries, Wendy Wu Tours offers a 20-day cruise from Laos through Thailand to Burma and China.

Linh Farid, Southeast Asia product manager for Wendy Wu Tours, said: "It's a river of great contrasts, passing through bio-diverse, rich wilderness and bustling cities such as Phnom Penh and Ho Chi Minh City, so it's always recommended to pack for a variety of conditions.

"Keep your camera and binoculars close at hand at all times so you can spot the

wildlife along the river banks and take photos."

Riviera Travel operates cruises from mid-October to early April on the 64-passenger Mekong Prestige II and Mekong Adventurer, which carries 60 guests.

APT works with Vietnamese-Australian celebrity chef Luke Nguyen and guests travelling on AmaLotus can dine at his private restaurant Indochine. They can also take part in a culinary class at Nguyen's cookery school in Ho Chi Minh City and enjoy a degustation dinner at the city's Xu Restaurant, inspired by Nguyen, when they book a luxury river cruise to Vietnam with APT.

Asked for her tips to travellers, Angela Waite, head of sales and commercial for APT, said: "Bring sunscreen, mosquito spray and a good pair of walking shoes, along with pens, pencils, notepads and T-shirts to give to children in the remote villages of the Mekong.

"Pack a camera as every stop is an amazing photo opportunity. Finally, head up to the sundeck at sunset – the Mekong sunsets are spectacular."



SELL IT

Viking offers a 15-day Magnificent Mekong trip from Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City departing on August 10 from £4,299 per person. The price includes flights, full board, drinks and 14 guided tours.

vikingcruises.co.uk
0800 319 6660

Pandaw has upgraded its Classic Mekong itinerary to include the dolphins at Kratié in Cambodia. From US\$1,755 per person, the seven-day cruise includes excursions, local soft drinks, beer and spirits and crew gratuities.
pandaw.com
0208 326 5620

Titan Travel has teamed up with Uniworld for a 17-day Timeless Wonders of Vietnam trip for £4,949 per person. The price includes flights, seven nights in hotels, a seven-night cruise on Mekong Navigator from My Tho to Siem Reap and Titan's VIP door-to-door service.

titantravel.co.uk
0800 988 5873

Other lines featuring Mekong cruises

Avalon
avaloncruises.co.uk

Cosmos Tours and Cruises
cosmostoursandcruises.co.uk

G Adventures
gadventures.co.uk

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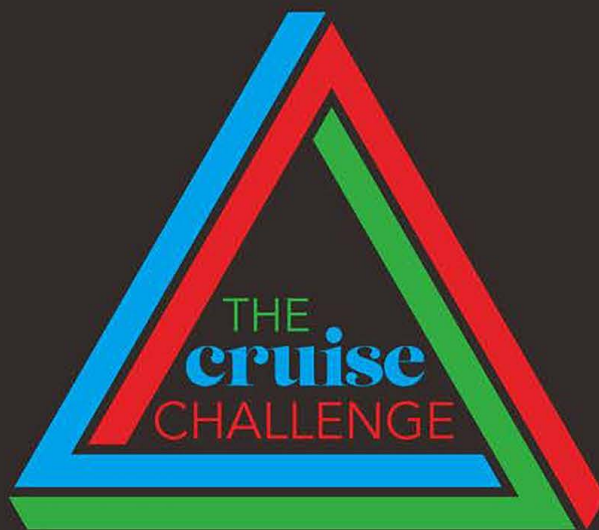
Dates for the diary....

Manchester: June 13
London: June 15
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Ipswich: June 22
Leeds: November 7
Newcastle: Nov 9
Liverpool: Nov 14
London: Nov 16
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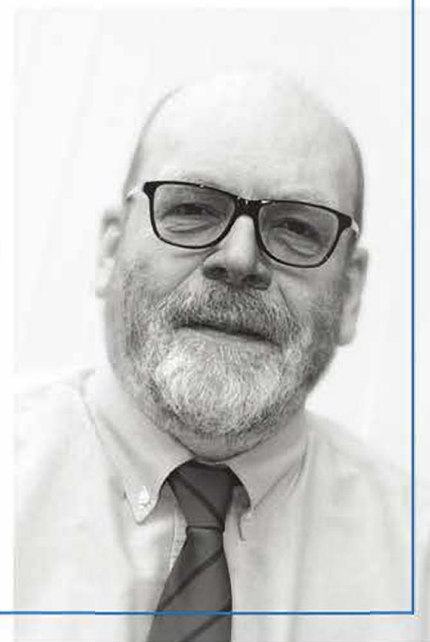
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cruise
TRADE NEWS

CRUISE LINES BID TO BREAK CHINA MARKET

Operators are building ships to cater for the demands of the Chinese market but what will this mean for the UK market? asks **John Honeywell**



Cruise lines are obsessed with China. It almost seems like they can't build ships fast enough to meet what they hope will one day be a market even bigger than the US.

If that happens, the UK – already relegated to third in the world behind Germany – could become an irrelevance and we might be left with second-hand ships rather than brand new vessels with all their bells and whistles.

But the rush to the Chinese takeaway could become a sweet and sour affair.

No-one really knows whether the Chinese population will take to cruising in vast numbers. Okay, so there's 1.4 billion of them and the majority are getting more prosperous year by year. But most have never even seen the sea, let alone considered taking a holiday on a ship.

There's a growing number travelling to what we call the West, many of them to Britain. Their most-visited attraction? It's not Buckingham Palace, Alton Towers or Shakespeare's Birthplace, but the ever-growing designer shopping outlet at Bicester Village.

Eight out of 10 Chinese visitors to our shores make a pilgrimage there to spend hundreds of pounds on handbags, jewellery, "last-season's" dress designs. Just as on the cruise ships built for Chinese passengers, signage is in English and Mandarin – at Bicester and also at London's Marylebone station from where they set out.

The obsession with spending on luxury

goods explains why cruise ships destined for China have much more retail space, but have the cruise planners judged their market correctly?

Do the Chinese, who have become wealthy enough to afford luxury holidays, want to cruise their local waters, or would they rather venture further afield to Europe and the Americas?

Anecdotal evidence shows that many cruise passengers from China are more interested in snapping up bargain-priced

"The obsession with spending on luxury goods explains why cruise ships destined for China have much more retail space"

consumer goods and cosmetics in Japanese discount warehouses than in cossetting themselves in a ship's spa.

Will they be prepared to spend extra to eat in specialty restaurants? Do they have a taste for Italian food that would have them booking tables in La Cucina on Norwegian Joy or Jamie's Italian on Royal Caribbean ships? What will they make of Harmony, the haute cuisine Chinese restaurant on Majestic Princess?

They are not interested in sunbathing – hence the decision to put a fixed glass roof over the Sanctuary pool on Majestic

Princess. It's not even a sliding Magradome of the sort that is opened or closed depending on the weather.

Norwegian Joy has installed a Laser Battle complex and a go-kart track because there's less need to have serried ranks of sun loungers. The Chinese are reputed to be obsessed with gambling, and the newer ships going East have larger casinos almost exclusively filled with Baccarat tables – fewer roulette tables and no Blackjack.

Will their supposed obsession with karaoke justify the provision of complexes of karaoke rooms on Majestic and Joy?

Cruise planners are obsessed with market research and no doubt believe they have made the right decision. Although it didn't take long for Princess Cruises to announce a change of plans for Majestic.

The ship had not even reached China when it was announced that instead of sailing year-round from Shanghai it would move to Australia for a six-month season of cruises from September 2018. Cruises that – unlike the Chinese itineraries – will be on sale in the UK.

The great thing about cruise ships as a holiday destination is that, unlike hotels, they are not fixed. They can be moved around the world to meet or to generate customer demand.

Could some of these Chinese takeaways be sailing from Southampton before long? Better brush up on your Mandarin just in case, so you can read the signs in the lifts. ⚓

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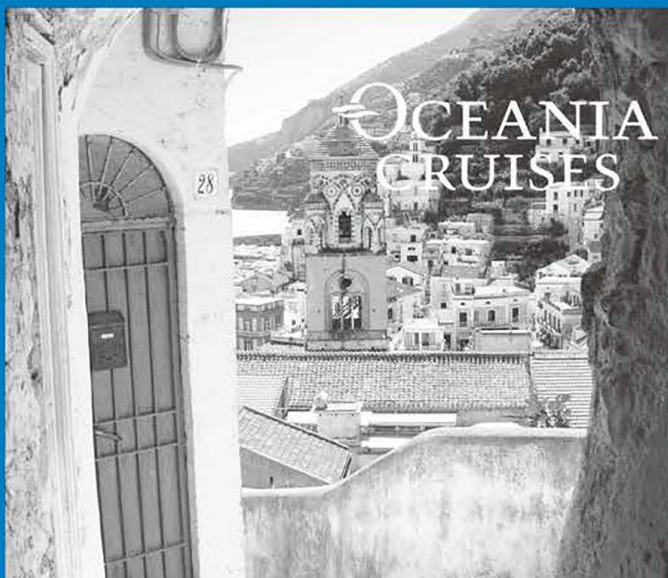
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