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MARCH 2019



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Letter

Welcome to the March issue



Ask holidaymakers what the most important part of any cruise is and the likelihood is they'll mention the itinerary, the ship, the on-board facilities and the shore excursions. But what about giving due consideration to another element entirely – courteous and friendly staff can really make a cruise holiday after all.

The importance of good service is absolutely essential within the cruise industry – and that extends prior to embarkation at the point of sale too – so that's why *Cruise Trade News* is partnering with leading employee engagement survey specialist Best Companies to discover the best places to work in cruise. See full details of how to participate in this exciting new initiative on page 11.

Also in this issue we have yet another fantastic competition for you – the chance to be one of the first people to board AmaWaterways' new ship, the *Ama Magna*, for an unforgettable sailing down the Danube. Check out the competition on pages 12 and 13 to find out how to be in with a chance of winning.

Don't forget, too, that you still have the opportunity to win a weekend away in Amsterdam that includes lunch on board Holland America Line's delightfully elegant *Nieuw Statendam* – plus five Elemis spa kits are up for grabs (see *page six*).

Elsewhere in the issue we turn the spotlight on expedition cruising, with a look at how to sell voyages to Alaska on page 25 and an industry roundtable write-up (*pages 28-31*).

For destination inspiration we bring you the Atlantic Islands, Bali and Stockholm, while our focus on brands at sea recounts how big names such as Marco Pierre White, Lego and Cirque du Soleil are all helping to boost the popularity of cruise holidays (*pages 46-47*).

Enjoy reading the issue and see you again in April.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Colette Doyle'.

Colette Doyle
Editor
@cruisetradenews

The Buzz

OUR ESSENTIAL ROUND-UP OF ALL THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CRUISE MARKET, SPECIALLY TAILORED FOR TRAVEL AGENTS

AWARDS



Celebrating the Oscars of cruising

The 2019 Wave Awards once again proved a huge hit on the cruising calendar.

It was held at London's De Vere Grand Connaught Rooms on 7 March, and guests gathered for a black-tie event and gala dinner.

This year saw the introduction of new categories, including Environmental Initiative, Best Retail Agent, Best Non-Retail Agent and Best Agent Consortia or Homeworking Agency.

Other highlights of the night included the John Honeywell Award, named after the

former editor-at-large of *World of Cruising* and a true industry legend, and the Grand Prix Winner, recognising those who have gone above and beyond to drive the sector forward.

The Wave Awards – launched in 2015 by Real Response Media – celebrate the very best of the UK's cruise industry.

Visit the Wave Awards website – www.thewaveawards.com – to see the list of winners. There will be further coverage in the April edition of *Cruise Trade News*.

COMPETITION

Win luxury Elemis kits in HAL competition

Holland America Line is giving *Cruise Trade News* readers the chance to win luxury Elemis spa products.

On HAL's ships all guests enjoy complimentary Elemis products in their bathrooms. Now you too can enjoy the same perk.

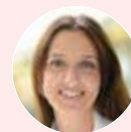
The prize is part of the HAL/CTN competition to win a weekend in Amsterdam in June that includes a visit to the line's elegant *Nieuw Statendam* ship.

The break features a full day on board the ship while she's in port, where a delicious lunch will be served.

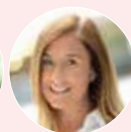
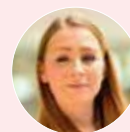
Cruise Trade News will be on board to cover the trip, so you can read all about it on social media and in the magazine. Find out how to enter at www.cruisetradenews.com/halcompetition/.



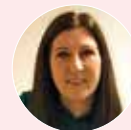
APPOINTMENTS



Princess Cruises has appointed **Ellie Webb** as sales manager for its agent-facing regional business team. Webb, with five territory managers across the UK, will report into Rachel Poultney, sales director UK & Europe.



Cunard has promoted **Victoria Snelgar** to the role of business manager and **Amy Williams** to the role of senior business manager. Snelgar will lead six regional partnership development managers, while Williams will develop existing trade links.



Kerry Gallagher has been promoted to the new position of marketing director for Gold Medal and Travel 2. She will be responsible for all business-to-business activity across both operators, including the specialist brand Cruise Plus.



Fred River Cruises has appointed **Lucy Hone** as its dedicated business development manager. She will be developing brand recognition of operators in the Fred River portfolio – Amadeus, American Cruise Lines, Pandaw, Volga Dream and Far Horizon.

OPINION

In my view

Anna Perrott, head of cruise at Travelbag, outlines why she believes customers are discovering new ways to book their cruise and what that means for agents

I've been selling cruise holidays for a few years and normally at this time we're all ready to lie down in a darkened room trying to recover from the dreaded 'peaks' season. In the businesses I have worked in, it seems that the months of January and February have become more of a challenge for both agents and customers.

Admittedly, there has been uncertainty with the economic environment this year, but I believe people are choosing to book their holidays in very different ways.

Shopping trends are changing, with high street footfall dropping and the days of people queuing outside stores at five am dwindling. So, how are habits changing? First, TV adverts and social media have a huge influence.

More people are now choosing their next holiday destination based on its Instagrammability or travel bragging rights. We're all susceptible to travel FOMO (fear of missing out) when a colleague or friend has been to a bigger or better place.

A new type of cruiser

Customers are, in a nutshell, becoming more adventurous. Holidays are

precious, and people want to come home to talk about their travel stories rather than showing off their lovely tan from a week in the sun.

This is great news for travel agents, as people want advice from the experts – the agents themselves. Knowledge is power and clients prefer to book with someone who knows exactly what they are talking about; whether that is in a store or on the phone.

Clients are taking their time and, rather than rushing to book at the start of the year, more people are researching into exactly what they want, rather than a 'deal'.

Offers from cruise lines are becoming more frequent throughout the year, with flash sales and campaigns, meaning there isn't as much of a rush to book as in previous years. Cash has also become more instant, with easy instalment payments, credit cards, low deposits and so on.

The great news for us cruise experts is that we can combine multiple destinations into one holiday.

As this new-found adventurous streak takes hold, why not recommend a cruise to someone who had never thought of one before? We have seen a rise in bookings with clients wanting to



"More people are now choosing their next holiday destination based on its Instagrammability or travel bragging rights. We're all susceptible to travel FOMO (fear of missing out)"

combine both a land tour and cruise together – getting the best of both worlds. No one particularly wants to fly hundreds of miles to then embark a ship and see nothing of that country. Explore when you first land, then take in as much culture as you can before sailing on to your next destination in luxury. In my opinion, cruisers generally want to experience as much as they can of each country or city, so give them the option to get right in the thick of it.

It is an exciting time in the industry, as new ships launch, and on-board activities expand. However, this is only the start, and we will be sure to break the three million passenger mark. ⚓



'People want to come home with their travel stories,' says Anna

NEW SHIPS



Oasis-class ships are to have a sixth sister

Royal orders sixth Oasis-class ship

Royal Caribbean is once again adding to its fleet.

The line has announced plans to launch a sixth Oasis-class vessel, to be built by French company Chantiers de l'Atlantique. It is scheduled for delivery in 2023.

Royal Caribbean Cruises chairman and CEO Richard D Fain said: "It is such a pleasure to announce the order of another Oasis-class ship.

"This order is a reflection of the exceptional performance of this vessel class and the extraordinary partnership between Chantiers de l'Atlantique and Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd."

The Oasis class currently consists of *Symphony of the Seas*, *Oasis of the Seas*, *Allure of the Seas*, *Harmony of the Seas*, and the as-yet-unnamed fifth vessel in the class, which is due for delivery in 2021.

EVENTS

Cruise Challenge 2019 roadshow is underway

After months of anticipation, the 2019 edition of the Cruise Challenge – the agent roadshow with a difference – kicked off with a bang.

The first event, held in central London, saw teams of travel agents battle it out in a unique gameshow format for the right to be entered into a prize draw to win a Mediterranean cruise for two.

Following an extremely tight contest, in which a very lively crowd took every opportunity to showcase their cruising – and karaoke – talents, the red team emerged victorious.

Find out more about the 2019 events and how to attend here: www.thecruisechallenge.com.



A Med cruise could be on the cards for one of these teams

IN BRIEF

CLIA expedition speakers revealed

CLIA UK & Ireland has revealed the keynote speakers for its first-ever expedition cruise forum. The event, which takes place in London on 28 March, will hear from British documentary maker and marine biologist Monty Halls, appearing courtesy of Silversea, and exploration leader Robin West, who is vice-president of expedition operations and planning for Seabourn.

Three ships, one day

Princess Cruises celebrated an industry first as it held events for three ships under construction in just one day. *Sky Princess*, which launches in October this year, was treated to a 'Madrina' ceremony, while the keel-laying took place for *Enchanted Princess* at the same shipyard. The fifth Royal-class ship will launch in Southampton in June 2020. In addition, a steel-cutting ceremony was held for the as-yet-unnamed sixth Royal-class ship, which joins the fleet in 2022.

Scenic Eclipse delayed again

The launch of *Scenic Eclipse* has been pushed back to 15 August 2019. Scenic announced last July a five-month delay until January 2019, although that date was later amended to 13 April. It had been due to enter service in August 2018. The cruise line blamed financial difficulties at the Uljanik shipyard, where the ship is being built.

Live it up in Bimini

Virgin Voyages has unveiled a new resort in the Bahamas that will feature on all *Scarlet Lady* voyages. The Beach Club at Bimini is described as a "stylish setting with white sand and crystal-clear waters", where guests will experience activities that "rival the best beach clubs in Ibiza and Saint-Tropez".



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plus choose one:
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The environment

We round up the latest news on how cruise is going 'green'

Ponant switches to cleaner fuel



Ponant has revealed that since 1 January this year its fleet has been running on cleaner fuel.

The company has replaced Heavy Fuel Oil with a greener alternative – Low Sulphur Marine Gas Oil, which contains fewer pollutants.

Come 1 January 2020, even ships operating outside designated emission control areas will be required to use fuels with a maximum sulphur content of 0.5 per cent.

The move, from the International Maritime Organisation, is intended to reduce the amount of sulphur oxide emanating from ships.

Oceania to ditch plastic

Oceania Cruises has launched an initiative to eliminate millions of plastic water bottles per year through a partnership with Vero Water.

This project is the latest in the cruise line's OceaniaNEXT enhancements and its Sail & Sustain environmental programme.

The first element focuses on implementing an on-board water service in suites, staterooms, restaurants, lounges and bars, starting in April and running to June.

Phase two will see all guests provided with their own re-usable Vero Water bottle.

Oceania president and CEO Bob Binder said: "By introducing Vero Water to the Oceania Cruises experience, we are not only taking a quantum leap forward environmentally, we are providing our



Polluting plastics will be a thing of the past on Oceania ships

guests with the gold standard of still and sparkling water."

Vero Water focuses on developing reusable glass bottles.

Southampton goes electric

Solent Stevedores has taken delivery of 33 fully electric counter-balance fork lift trucks in preparation for the 2019 cruise season at the Port of Southampton.

The company provides services for approximately 80 per cent of cruise ships calling at the port.

It is hoped that the electric vehicles will help reduce emissions and the environmental footprint of port operations.

This year, it is estimated Solent Stevedores will provide port services for around 370 cruise ships.



Southampton port will be aiming for fewer emissions

SURVEY

CTN launches employee engagement initiative

Cruise Trade News has partnered with employee engagement survey specialist Best Companies Group to discover the best companies to work for in the cruise industry.

This is the first time that the Best Companies Group has joined forces with an organisation in the cruise sector.

Registrations are welcome from travel agencies selling cruise, cruise line operators and suppliers to the industry. The deadline is not until the 27 September, so there is plenty of time to register for the survey. Companies that pre-ordered reports will then receive an invoice within seven days.

A total of 25 per cent of the evaluation is based upon the benefits companies offer and the great things they are doing for their staff. The remainder comes from an anonymous employee engagement survey.

The benefits of entering include improved organisational pride and morale, as well as a boost to marketing and PR efforts, through exposure in a respected, employee-led evaluation.

CTN editor Colette Doyle said: "This is a fantastic opportunity to showcase what makes your business stand out in the



Great service is the hallmark of a good cruise line



cruise sector.

"We all appreciate that employee engagement is now recognised as a real game changer. There are no judges here, just a rigorous, scientifically proven, two-part assessment process. We very much hope that our readers and advertisers will take part in this extremely worthwhile initiative."

Registration and participation in the CTN Best Companies to Work For programme are free of charge.

CTN will announce the companies that have attained the status of Best Company to Work For at the 2020 Wave Awards ceremony.

Visit the website at **CTNBestCompanies.com** for more details.

PROGRAMME TIMELINE

- 7 March 2019 – www.CTNBestCompanies.com website is launched at the Wave Awards in central London
- 8 March – promotional efforts (ads, mailings, social media, etc) commence
- 27 September – participation registration deadline. Verification will be sent within 24 hours
- 30 September – a web link for the BCG employer questionnaire will be sent to the contact at each of the registered companies
- 11 October – completed employer questionnaires are due
- 14 October – online employee engagement and satisfaction surveys are sent via email
- 25 October – deadline for all online versions of the employee survey
- 10 December – BCG delivers the CTN's Best Companies to Work For in Cruise list to *Cruise Trade News*
- 17 December – BCG prepares and issues notification letters to the participants
- 17 December – the BCG report is delivered to *Cruise Trade News*
- 20 December – the BCG employee feedback reports are sent to participating companies
- 17 December 2019-March 2020 – report publication and event development in process
- March 2020 – publication date for CTN's Best Companies to Work For and presentation at the Wave Awards



Motivated teams make for the best customer care

WIN

A wonderful trip down the Danube on AmaWaterways' amazing new ship

AmaWaterways is launching its new luxury river ship, the *AmaMagna*, this year, and one of our lucky readers plus a guest could be among the first to experience it. An evolution of AmaWaterways' award-winning European river fleet, *AmaMagna* offers the luxury of even more space and opportunities for dining, exploring and relaxing.

This ground-breaking luxury river cruise ship is unlike any other.

With a hull double the width of traditional river vessels, she has space for ocean-worthy amenities while still capturing the intimacy and beauty of

the Danube River on which she will sail.

Despite being double the width, *AmaMagna* will accommodate just 196 passengers, expertly looked after by 70 staff, offering an unprecedented amount of personal space. More than half of her 98 elegant staterooms are expansive suites featuring full-width balconies, and every stateroom is carefully appointed with spacious bathrooms featuring multi-jet showerheads and an entertainment-on-demand system providing complimentary TV, movies and music library.

As a member of the exclusive international culinary society, La Chaîne des Rôtisseurs, AmaWaterways offers

exquisite, locally inspired cuisine.

Passengers can enjoy a choice of four on-board restaurants, all of which are complimentary, and savour carefully selected regional wines, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner. Healthy, locally inspired cuisine is also available throughout the ship, as are delicious vegetarian and gluten-free dishes.

To balance the delicious dining options, there is also a wealth of wellness activities available. *AmaMagna* features an expansive Zen Wellness Studio offering group classes focused on stretching, cardio and circuit training, all led by a professionally trained wellness host.

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From swimming in the Sun Deck pool to relaxing in the whirlpool or exercising in the fitness centre, *AmaMagna* offers a variety of activities to provide a personalised experience for every guest. Plus, it offers exclusive excursions: board a Sundowner boat from the unique Water Sports Platform to get even closer to the stunning views of the river. For those keen to remain active on shore, there's a chance to pedal through the local villages, towns and cities with *AmaMagna's* fleet of complimentary bicycles. ⚓

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Reaching out

Jane Atkins, managing director at Shearings Holidays, speaks to *Cruise Trade News* about industry trends and how the cruise sector can broaden its appeal

What makes Shearings Holidays unique among its competition?

Shearings Holidays offers a wide range of ships and standards, from great value at entry level to premium options. We are not constrained by one brand, one river or one style of ship, and we pride ourselves on offering flexibility.

Customers can join our ships either by coach, rail or air – whatever works for them. Coach travel allows those who are less confident when travelling to be 'hand held' from their local pick-up point in the UK to their arrival at the ship and throughout their holiday, as the coach remains with the ship. For many, this creates a unique feeling of travelling with friends.

Why should guests book with Shearings Holidays?

We are a trusted company with over 100 years' experience. We offer great choice with a variety of ships available to book and flexible travel options including coach, rail and air, plus a door-to-door service on some cruises.

There is also the option to extend the holiday with a pre-or post-cruise stay. Our dedicated Shearings cruise managers are also on hand throughout



all our charter and group allocation cruises, while the majority of our river cruise itineraries include one or two excursions. For 2019, we are offering 54 itineraries across 23 ships on all the major European rivers.

What are the hottest trends in the industry?

Travel is all about experiences and bragging rights, and river cruising lends itself to this trend. It offers a whole raft of experiences in one holiday, all with the bonus of only unpacking once.

In addition, a river cruise offers so many experiences, as it features many city breaks in one, with the opportunity to disembark in many different places and explore by coach, by foot or – in some cases – even by bicycle. Guests will experience amazing scenery, and at disembarkation, see some of the most alluring historic cities in Europe.

All-inclusive is another key element, allowing customers to budget in advance. A river cruise is a fabulous way to enjoy a great gastronomic experience without breaking the bank – we even have some drinks-inclusive packages.

As family dynamics in the UK change, there is a growing trend towards multi-generational travel, and A-ROSA, in particular, offers free cabins for children under 15.

What are the key challenges in the industry?

The political landscape is starting to influence travel choices and as an operator we have to continually reassure customers that it is still safe to travel.

The consumer press needs to take some responsibility in supporting this, especially publications that are big travel influencers, by sticking to facts regarding issues such as passports and immigration queues, and resisting the temptation to run stories with sensational headlines.

Foreign exchange variances are always a consumer consideration and river cruising certainly removes this worry, with so much being included – even excursions when travelling with Shearings Holidays.

What can operators such as Shearings Holidays do to promote cruise to a new demographic?

It is our responsibility to tell the story of river cruising, as for some it is still a bit of a mystery. I don't believe that potential customers really know what is on offer and what they might see and experience on the waterways.

Therefore, we need to broaden the appeal of river cruising by attracting culture vultures as well as those who enjoy the outdoors.

How do you intend to grow the Shearings Holidays brand over the coming years?

Shearings Holidays is one of the best-recognised brands in the UK, but



A-Rosa: ideal for family cruising



Combine a river cruise
and city break for a
unique experience



Group travel is popular on
European waterways

we will continue to differentiate the offering by creating sub brands that appeal to a wider demographic and signpost products more effectively to relevant audiences.

How will the industry evolve over the coming years?

It's hard to predict, but I expect customers will become more knowledgeable about products on offer as their access to information and content is limitless and not restricted to a brochure.

Operators need to distil information for customers and present products in a way that is right for their relevant audiences and inspires new customers.

Going forward, products will need to look less packaged as customers become more independent. For example, they may take a river cruise but want to choose how they get there and want to spend a couple of days in a city, therefore creating their own adventure.

The flip side of this, however, is that brand security and trust will be important in an uncertain world, so any company that can appear agile and dynamic is likely to win favour. ⚓

This is
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54 itineraries aboard 23 stylish ships,
sailing Europe's most enchanting waterways

JOIN OUR CRUISES BY COACH, AIR OR RAIL

Our river cruises are a well-known jewel in the Shearings crown and for 2019, our expert team have been hard at work to bring you our best yet – plus a new collection of ocean cruises too!

With our signature chartered ships, plus cruising by A-ROSA Cruises and CroisiEurope, you can expect all-time favourite destinations and ever-popular ships with a considered sprinkling of new holidays, giving you an unrivalled range to choose from.

Every feature of a Shearings cruise is thoughtfully planned with real experience and genuine passion. We pay close attention to the finer details so that your customers' holiday is everything they dreamed it would be, and more.

From relaxing days meandering through some of Europe's most beautiful scenery to exploring the charm and culture of riverside towns and cities, we strive to deliver truly memorable experiences.





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Known as the Garden of France due to its abundance of vineyards, orchards and agricultural fields the area around the Loire River has been an important part of France for centuries. The river is lined with ancient towns and cities and hundreds of castles built between the 5th and 17th centuries.

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Subject to Shearings T&C's and availability. Holiday prices are 'From' and are per person based on 2 people sharing a standard cabin traveling by coach and joining at an interchange. * When booking a Mozart & Chopin deck cabin. Flights/cabin supplements may apply. E&OE.

Sales inspiration

OFFER

Join the academy

Scenic and Emerald Waterways have launched a new online training course, Agent Academy.

The academy offers courses to help agents broaden their knowledge of Scenic Cruises & Tours and Emerald Waterways Cruises.

Current modules include an introduction to Scenic and Emerald

Waterways, as well as European river cruising with both brands. New courses will appear throughout the year.

Director of UK trade sales Joseph Grimley said: "We love working with agents, and we are constantly striving to offer the very best support in promoting and booking with Scenic and Emerald Waterways.

"Agent Academy is our next step, providing an online training course that can be accessed 24/7 for travel agents who would like to learn more about our river cruises, ocean cruises and escorted tours."

Sign up to Agent Academy at <https://agentacademy.litmos.com/self-signup/>.



Agents can sign up to learn even more about Emerald's ships

INCENTIVE



'40 for 40' at Titan

Titan Travel is celebrating its 40th anniversary with a UK-wide competition exclusively for its trade partners.

The '40 Cabins for 40 Years' initiative will give 40 agents the chance to win a Titan river cruise for two. To enter, agents must sell four or more Titan river cruises before the closing date of 31 March 2019. Winners will be selected on a first-come, first-served basis.

The incentive runs alongside Titan's River Cruise 2020 brochure, which includes nine new sailing itineraries on its two chartered ships, *MS Serenade 1* and *MS Bellejour*.

Bookings can be made on Titan's website – www.titanagents.co.uk – or by calling 0800 988 5800.

Tauck goes solo

Tauck has waived single supplements on its category one European river ship cabins.

The offer applies on all river cruise itineraries.

Overall, the single supplement is being waived on more than 200 departures for 2019.

In addition, Tauck is reducing the single supplement by £690 on other selected cabin categories on 54 departures for 17 different river itineraries.

"We've long welcomed solo travellers by offering savings on our tours and cruises, and we're thrilled to continue that tradition," said Tauck CEO Dan Mahar.



OFFER

Win an African cruise

INCENTIVE

Travel agents can still win a stunning Southern Africa cruise with CroisiEurope.

Agents have until 30 April to make as many *African Dream* bookings as they can, with the eight top sellers winning a trip to Southern Africa for a four-day cruise on Lake Kariba on board the *African Dream*, a four-day stay in a lodge near Chobe National Park, as well

as overnights in Johannesburg and Victoria Falls. Flights and gratuities are also included.

Agents need to sell a minimum of two cabins on any 2019 or 2020 *African Dream* itinerary. Winners will be announced in May and the prize must be taken on selected dates this year.

The prize is non-transferable and there is no cash alternative. Bookings must be secured by a deposit.



Lake Kariba could be on the itinerary for top sellers

Raise a glass to AmaMagna

INCENTIVE

AmaWaterways is offering an 'AmaMagnum' of Champagne for agents booking a suite on *AmaMagna*.

Clients can enjoy complimentary business class flights and overseas transfers, plus a range of other benefits when they book a suite on *AmaMagna*.

Guests sailing in a suite receive a welcome gift including a bottle of champagne, a mobile wifi hot spot providing free connectivity off ship, complimentary laundry service and an in-suite mini-bar.

Alternatively, guests looking for

a stateroom on board *AmaMagna* can take advantage of complimentary economy class flights and overseas transfers. The offer is valid on new bookings made by 31 March 2019 for *AmaMagna* sailings between May and November 2019 and 2020.

Agents can earn a bottle of champagne for each booking, and those with guests sailing in a suite can claim an 'AmaMagnum' of champagne.

Email agencysupport@amawaterways.com for more details.



A booking on *AmaMagna* might mean a bottle of fizz

Winning streak

In this regular series of articles profiling the winners of last year's Cruise Star Awards, we speak to Poppy Outram, senior cruise consultant at Bolsover Cruise Club

HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT WINNING NOT ONE BUT TWO CRUISE STARS AWARDS – REGIONAL TRAVEL AGENT SALES STAR FOR THE NORTH EAST, AND NATIONAL TRAVEL AGENT SALES STAR?

In an industry as big and competitive as ours, it is an honour and privilege to receive these incredible accolades.

They have pride of place on my desk at the Bolsover Cruise Club HQ and each time I see them I genuinely feel a great swell of pride and achievement.

WHAT DO YOU THINK WERE THE MAIN FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTED TO YOUR SUCCESS?

I hope that the judges saw the passion I have for the cruise industry. I absolutely adore my job.

Helping someone to make amazing holiday memories that they will carry through their life is so rewarding. I have also been able to demonstrate a steep increase in sales figures during the past couple of years – another factor that I am incredibly proud of.

WHAT TIPS CAN YOU PASS ON TO OTHER TRAVEL AGENTS TO HELP THEM BE SUCCESSFUL?

Know your product. Every cruise line has something unique to offer, so you have to know as much as you possibly can about every ship to find the one that suits your client.

Build your knowledge, read customer reviews, study deck plans, watch YouTube videos of the ships and do every possible bit of training that you can get your hands on.

“ I have amazing clients who send me photos and tag me in their social media posts while they are cruising ”



"If you've been there and done that, you can emphasise each cruise line's USP," says Poppy

The best knowledge you can have is experience. So many operators offer ship visits and fam trips – get on as many of these as you can. If you've been there and done it, you can emphasise the unique selling points of each cruise line.

We're fortunate at Bolsover Cruise Club that as cruise specialists our entire business is built on expanding knowledge and becoming experts. Collectively, we've spent over 15,000 nights at sea.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BEST EXPERIENCE IN SELLING CRUISE HOLIDAYS SO FAR?

The best part of what I do is seeing the fruits of my labour with my own eyes. I have amazing clients who send me photos and tag me in their social media posts while they are cruising. There's just something wonderful about getting a grinning selfie from someone and knowing you helped to put that smile on their face.

WHAT INNOVATIONS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE BEING INTRODUCED BY CRUISE LINE OPERATORS?

A month ago I would have said hammocks on the balcony, but Virgin Voyages has beaten me to that. There are so many incredible features on ships now that coming up with something new is a hard task.

Who'd have thought you could do go-karting at sea or have a robot serve you a cocktail? I think going forward anyone taking on the already mammoth task of designing a new ship has a very difficult challenge.

I would personally love to see even more exciting al fresco dining options. For me, part of being on a cruise is sitting outside in the sunshine, so I'd love to see a wider range of these across ships.

WHAT WOULD BE YOUR DREAM CRUISE DESTINATION?

It's got to be Alaska. Frustratingly, I have booked my parents on an amazing cruise and land tour package to Alaska this year, and despite my continued pleading they are refusing to smuggle me in their cases. I will have to keep dreaming... for now. ⚓

Day in the life

What you do and how you do it – in your own words



**Bridget
Coe**

**Franchise manager at
GoCruise/Fred Olsen Travel**

My alarm goes off at...

6.30 most mornings. It's a leap out of bed, much to my other half's annoyance, as he's not good in the morning. I have time to sit and have a good breakfast and a huge mug of coffee, as this sets me up for the day.

My job entails...

Working as a franchise manager for GoCruise, looking after more than 60 franchisees on a daily basis.

I involve myself in all sorts of things – training and development, marketing, exhibitions, building relationships with cruise and travel partners. Every day is different and there's never a dull moment, but I wouldn't have it any other way.

I got my job...

In 2011. I have always been in the travel industry since I left school and having been out on the road for many years I liked the idea of being local to where I live in Ipswich for once. Happily, it all worked out and I landed this fabulous job.

A typical day involves...

Making sure that everything I do and everything my team does adds value to our business. I have a list of five priorities for each day that are a must and one of those five will be clearing a huge volume of emails that I get daily.

Next, I'll talk to or visit my franchisees

Crisps keep her
going through
lunchtime



about all sorts, including how they are performing on their figures, getting feedback as to what they are booking and looking for opportunities to do more marketing activity. I am also responsible for recruiting more franchisees into our GoCruise business.

At lunchtime...

I have nothing to eat as I've already eaten it at around 10:30am. If there is food on my desk, it's gone before lunchtime and it's normally two packets of crisps – not healthy, I know!

The most stressful part of my job is...

Receiving too many emails when a conversation would have sufficed. I'm a big believer in 'It's good to talk', as emails can sometimes get misconstrued.

I love it when...

A franchisee shouts about a great booking they have made – you can just hear their excitement and they will want to know if that great booking has pushed

Calling could
be better than
email, says
Bridget



them up the franchise league table – the banter is just brilliant.

I'll never forget...

A time at a GoCruise conference when I threw all my notes on the floor and said it all from the heart – to a standing ovation.

We bring to the table...

Over 60 GoCruise franchisees who are knowledgeable and passionate about cruising and travel. They really are great at looking after their customers.

I'd shake up the industry by...

Getting cruise lines to clamp down on agents offering discounts. We should encourage agents to sell on their service. ⚓

CRYSTAL

WHERE LUXURY IS PERSONAL



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BEST MORE THAN ANY OTHER CRUISE
LINE, HOTEL OR RESORT IN HISTORY.





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ABTA No. V8548



Fares are per person, cruise only in UK sterling based on double occupancy in an outside stateroom and include port, security and handling charges, which vary by departure. All fares, offers and itineraries are subject to change and availability and can be withdrawn at any time. Fares may fluctuate and should be used as a guide only. Prices may go up or down. You should contact us on 0207 399 7601 before booking, or visit our website www.crystalcruises.co.uk. The fares are available to new bookings only and are only available to UK & Eire residents. Restrictions apply. See crystalcruises.co.uk for complete terms and conditions of all offers. ©2019 Crystal Cruises, LLC. Ships' registry: The Bahamas.



Holland America Line®

SAVOR THE JOURNEY

WE ARE
Alaska™
BY LAND • BY SEA • BY EXPERTS



We have been showing guests the marvel of the Great Land since 1947 - longer than any other cruise company, even longer than Alaska has been a state!

'We are Alaska' will take you deep into the heart of the Great Land on your very own journey to becoming an expert in Alaska!

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Training modules, desk top info packs, on-line video, incentives, webinars, educational travel experiences, fun Alaska party events, shared consumer event opportunities and much more.

Join The Fun and Find out more [f](#)@HALwearealaska #HALwearealaska

Win at selling Alaska

Alaska is a fantastic destination for first-time cruisers. Holland America Line's business development manager and Alaska expert **Katie Noviss** shares her insights into selling the Great Land

Proclaiming 'We Are Alaska' is a bold statement.

Only when a company has operated in a region for more than seven decades and offers more ways to visit this epic land than any other company, can it rightly justify such a claim.

Nobody knows Alaska better than we do – and we are launching our 'We are Alaska' programme to the travel trade and the consumer to show why we are the undisputed leader in the region.

Holland America Line has been showing travellers this beautiful region for more than 70 years. Travellers are increasingly seeking immersive 'close-to-nature' experiences and HAL's Alaska ticks all those boxes.

For instance, we know that many people considering Alaska are new to cruise, so agents could recommend they take a destination and touring experience along with the Rocky Mountaineer train, or even our immersive Land + Sea Journeys.

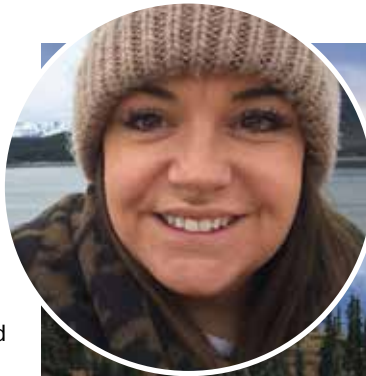
Travellers are also increasingly seeking full-on 'close-to-nature' experiences, and Alaska ticks all those boxes.

There are mountains and glaciers, and wildlife aplenty. Think dog sledding on a glacier, whale watching, taking a floatplane over stunning fjords, or trailing grizzlies and their cubs – all of these experiences are possible. ⚓

Read more about the 'We Are Alaska' campaign in our April issue, which will feature a one-to-one interview with Katie Noviss

FAST FACTS

- There are about 1.02 square miles for each person in Alaska
- There are more moose than residents in Alaska
- Alaskan holidays are normally taken between May and September, when temperatures may reach up to 72 degrees Fahrenheit and days are long and bright



You're probably more likely to see a moose than a human being

Katie's top tips

Combine with the Rockies

Clients may want to visit the Canadian Rockies, which are surprisingly easy to combine with an Alaska cruise. There are a number of tour operators that will offer an integrated Rockies and Alaska holiday with HAL.

Coastal scenery

On a seven-night Inside Passage cruise, HAL offers more Glacier Bay National Park visits than any other company. Guests have a whole day cruising the bay watching glaciers calve and seals perched on icebergs, and listening to fascinating talks by an expert.

Go further and deeper

It's easy to incorporate an Alaska cruise with up to three nights at the awe-inspiring Denali National Park, and even Canada's unspoiled Yukon on one of our HAL 'Land+Sea' holidays.



Ice is all around in Alaska – but there is a warmer season



Learning about sled-pulling starts from an early age

“In conversation with... Fred Olsen

At the time of writing, Keith Norman is barely a month into his crucial new role at Fred Olsen Cruise Lines. However, this is a man – and a company – with big ambitions, as **Gary Peters** finds out

Informal setting? Tick. Local craft drinks? Tick. Engaging company? Tick.

If an interviewer were writing a checklist for what constitutes an ideal interview, a sit-down with Keith Norman would tick just about every box.

Here is a man who knows what he wants to sell and how, yet doesn't underestimate the challenges that need to be overcome, as Fred Olsen seeks to increase its presence in the ever-growing river market.

"We made a step into the river cruise market as we wanted to transfer what we do well in the ocean cruise sector to river," he explains to *Cruise Trade News*.

"We've learnt a lot of lessons in the first year [since Fred's inaugural river cruise season in April 2018], but now, we want to give it real focus. We want the industry to know we are really serious about this. A dedicated resource was, therefore, the next step."

This "dedicated resource", is, for the time being, a team of one – as Keith flies the flag as Fred Olsen's first-ever dedicated river sales manager. He explains that the river team will grow over the coming months and years, but for

now he is "supported by a lot of shared resource in the company".

"For me, it's a great opportunity," he adds. "We are here to stay, so there will be an opportunity for me personally to really make it happen. I bring some ideas and thoughts that might be a little different – my background is not cruise, it's sales. I hope I can bring some fresh ideas to the table."

"On the face of it, there's a perception that all river ships are the very similar, so it's about us educating people and telling them 'we do this and this is the Fred experience'. It's a challenge, but we will get there."

BRITISH TRADITIONS

The "Fred experience", also known as 'feel the real' at Fred HQ, is expressed through its river ship, the 156-guest *Brabant*, which in 2019 has an expanded programme of 33 sailings, ranging from between five and 25 nights. Itineraries include Düsseldorf to Amsterdam; Düsseldorf to Nuremberg; Nuremberg to Budapest; and Hirsova to Düsseldorf, among others.

The ship stays true to the British style of the line's ocean-going cruise ships, as,

Brabant's Juliette balcony suite adheres to the traditional values Olsen guests prefer



Norman says, this is what its guests have told Fred they want – English spoken throughout the ship, all transactions done in pounds sterling and British-inspired cuisine. They also want more immersive experiences – quite the buzz word in the industry at the moment.

"We want to ignite all the senses," Norman says. "It's a 'deeper dive' cruise – we really allow guests to 'dive' into a destination. We look at itineraries in a different way; we don't just go port to port."

"With river ships, you don't get the big shows in the evenings, for example. It's a bit more cultural and people want to learn about the destinations. Going forward, that will be a key part of developing the brand."

GROWING THE FLEET

Which brings the conversation to the inevitable question: is Fred planning to grow its fleet of river ships?



On the face of it, there's a perception that all river ships are very similar, so it's about us educating people and telling them 'we do this and this is the Fred experience'."



Fred Olsen's river ship, *Brabant*, has the Moselle on its itinerary



British-inspired cuisine and an innovative prow characterise Olsen's river ship



What we are seeing is that some of our partners are now segmenting river within their businesses

"Yes, we have plans," says Norman. Can he expand on that? "That [bringing in new ships] will be decided by the board and the directors.

"However, I am pretty certain the fleet will grow. Commercially, it will work. It has to be done in the right way though, with the right ships to represent our brand. It also has to be done with the right destinations, so we need to explore what works for our guests."

Of course, a (potentially) bigger fleet could also mean new destinations for Fred river cruise guests to enjoy – Russia, the Nile? "Everything is on the table, so to speak," explains Norman.

"What we have to develop first is our key areas and what's right for us. No decision is made lightly – we look at all the factors and how we can deliver the Fred Olsen experience for our guests."

And this is where travel agents come in. River cruising, as many have stated, is experiencing unprecedented growth and is constantly evolving. That undoubtedly is changing how

river cruise lines are working with their agent partners.

"What we are seeing is that some of our partners are now segmenting river within their businesses," says Norman. "You'll have a dedicated river manager, for example.

"There are also companies that are specialising in river cruising. It's a bit like anything – some aspects are brilliant and some are still learning. However, people have recognised it as a growth area.

"Look at the 2018 CLIA river conference in Paris. As a body of operators, we are a very close community and everyone is working together. The dog-eat-dog world hasn't arrived yet. At the moment, there's enough out there for everyone."

Norman also has plans to attract new-to-cruise passengers – "it's a key element for us". He adds: "We are seeing new to cruise for our river product and yes there will be those who will say 'I love Fred's ocean cruises, I'll try river', but it is a different holiday. Our experience, on the whole, is that it is a different guest." ⚓



The tip of the

A group of expedition cruise specialists sat down with CTN deputy editor **Gary Peters** at CLIA's London HQ to discuss growth in the sector and why guests are eager for more experiential travel

The cruise sector is living in a time of trends. People want the "wow" of a destination – the sounds, the sights, the wildlife.

And there is a growing realisation that one of the ways in which to achieve this is through an expedition cruise.

The question is, why are we seeing this rapid expansion? "First, there is the overall consumer awareness," says Aurora Expeditions' sales director UK and Europe, Craig Upshall. "For example, places like Antarctica are on people's wish lists. They want to go down to the further reaches of the world.

"There is also increased tonnage coming into the market – with 30-plus expedition vessels on order, so that is

increasing awareness levels among agents." One of these new ships is Aurora's *Greg Mortimer*, setting sail in October 2019 and featuring the X-BOW, which pierces waves with greater ease, thereby improving fuel efficiency.

Also take into consideration CLIA's first-ever expedition cruise forum, to be held on 28 March in London.

It's not merely about what's happening inside the industry, however. The boom in television programmes showcasing the environment, such as David Attenborough's *Dynasties* and *Blue Planet*, has helped to make far-flung destinations seem more accessible to the general public.

Silversea's MD UK & Ireland, Peter



Seabourn is taking luxury into the expedition zone



CTN's Gary Peters, second left, meets, from left to right: Elaine Gillard, Frangelica Flook, Gabrielle Mundy, Carly Perkins, Peter Shanks, Ruth Gardiner and Craig Upshall

iceberg

Shanks, claims expedition "is of the moment". "People want to go and explore," he says. "The answer is all about destination. It's about people getting into nature. I sometimes say, 'it's the new river'. What's not to like?"

Strategic account manager at Celebrity Cruises Ruth Gardiner believes that the trade is now able to say to clients, "Yes, you can experience these destinations, such as the Galapagos." It's about getting destinations in front of potential clients and guests," she adds.

"The trade really understands expedition. Agents know we will take great care of guests and will fulfil expectations. We will take care of them from start to finish – agents know we

have the knowledge and experience. We are all experts in the destinations."

Carly Perkins, marketing manager at Seabourn – which is launching two luxury expedition ships in 2021 and 2022 – calls it the time of "personalisation", because, as she explains, "people want smaller groups, and this is where expedition ships can offer that opportunity".

Protecting the environment

However, such opportunity has to be balanced against the very real environmental concerns that exist in many destinations on the expedition 'tick list'.

For example, *Blue Planet II* showcased the damage caused to the ocean by

plastic waste; so does the subsequent public concern create food for thought for the cruise lines?

"We work with local authorities to ensure these destinations are wonderful to visit," explains Gardiner, who, alongside her colleagues, is patiently awaiting the arrival of the 100-passenger *Celebrity Flora*, which joins the fleet in May.

The ship, which will operate in the Galapagos Islands on 'green fuel', has been designed and built from a destination-first angle.

"We're going organic," says Gardiner. "All of the materials are locally sourced and have that look and feel of being part of the Galapagos. We say we are bringing the outside in."



“The challenges are about consumer perception of where we are going and how it is contributing to the environment. The climate is changing, so things will change, but we will adapt accordingly”

Craig Upshall
Aurora Expeditions

It's a laudable effort, and one that Shanks wholeheartedly agrees with. “We are all focused on the environment. I don't think it's a threat, rather a responsibility,” he explains. “We are regulated on what we do.”

For Upshall, “the challenges are about consumer perception of where we are going and how it is contributing to the environment. The climate is changing, so things will change, but we will adapt accordingly.”

That strikes this writer as an interesting observation – it's not just purely thinking about today, through things such as reducing single-use plastic and helping with beach clean-ups. This point is reinforced by Gardiner, who contends that “clients are keen to reach these regions while they can”.

People, she says, “wonder, ‘will these

environmental factors limit the numbers”?, adding: “The destinations you are in will have limitations, come a certain point. It's about sending guests home with a sense of marvel and wonderment.”

A changing dynamic

It could be argued that this sense of urgency is creating a new type of expedition cruiser, one who is keen to “accumulate memories”, as Perkins describes it.

“The Seabourn demographic wants to see and do something new. We are giving guests the option to do that, but they can still have the ultra-luxury dining and service that they are used to with Seabourn.”

At Aurora, the average age for expedition is slightly younger, at around



KEY POINTS

Destination is king – expedition cruising is all about taking guests to awe-inspiring places

The environment is high on the agenda – cruise lines are fully aware of their obligations when it comes to protecting nature

New ships will change the market – operators will offer more immersive experiences to stand out

There's lots more to come – expedition cruising is no flash in the pan

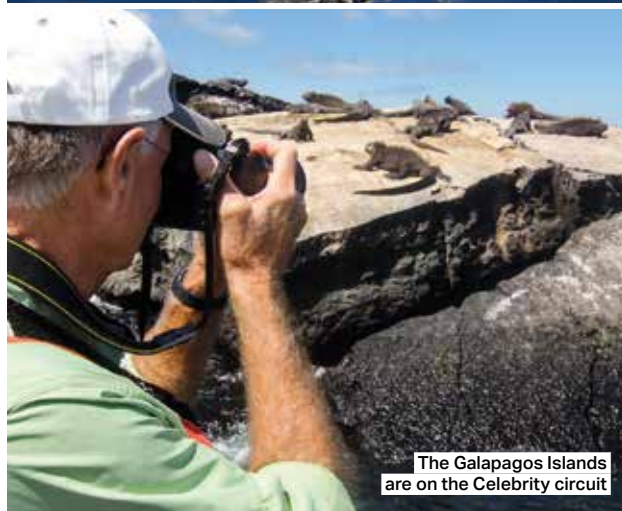
40, as people are keen to have ‘memory bank’ experiences rather than tangible assets, while Celebrity has noted an increase in multi-generation travel.

These guests want more comprehensive shore excursions and activities, from kayaking and hiking to polar diving and snorkelling.

How about glamping under the stars in the Galapagos? *Celebrity Flora* will feature a camping experience on the top



The Greg Mortimer has a bow designed for fuel efficiency



The Galapagos Islands are on the Celebrity circuit

Silversea's *Silver Cloud* will be sailing the first expedition world cruise



"The Seabourn demographic wants to see and do something new. We're giving guests the option to do that, but they can still have the ultra-luxury dining and service that they are used to with Seabourn"

Carly Perkins
Seabourn

deck, complete with two luxury cabanas, one for sleeping, the other for meals.

"You can sleep under the stars and wake up and be served breakfast under the stars," says Gardiner. "You are at one with the environment."

With new ships on order, the next challenge is to fill them. Not that those at the coal face are worried.

"For travel agents, the benefit for them selling [expedition] is the margin and commission – these are high value bookings," says Upshall. "If agents can get those customers and put them on the right product, they will earn a nice margin."

Shanks agrees: "We're selling a high value product, with high satisfaction levels. We all pay generous commission. From a business point of view – why wouldn't agents sell it?"

Uncharted waters

The big news for agents is that Silversea has just launched its first-ever expedition world cruise, sailing in 2021.

The 167-day cruise will travel from Ushuaia to Tromsø, calling at 107 destinations, in 30 countries, including six new ports of call for Silversea – Naxos, Folegandros, Nafpaktos, Ksamil, Bejaia and Fort William.

Departing Ushuaia on 30 January on *Silver Cloud*, guests will journey between Antarctica's highlight destinations, before setting course for Chile's Valparaiso via the Chilean fjords. It then calls in at a number of iconic destinations in Oceania, before arriving in Cairns, Australia, and then the Kimberley Coast.

Silver Cloud will also visit Indonesia and Singapore, before setting sail for Sumatra, Sri Lanka and Cochin, India,

prior to reaching Piraeus (Athens), Lisbon, and Reykjavik. The cruise then visits Iceland and the Svalbard Region, before concluding in Tromsø, Norway, on 16 July 2021.

"This is what is next in expedition," says Shanks. "It's new and it's different."

Elaine Gillard, senior sales and marketing manager for Crystal Cruises – which is launching *Crystal Endeavor* in August 2020 – believes that at the 'luxury end' of expedition "there is that need for the 'cool toys' to be there – such as helicopters and submarines".

"Where can you go? It's about aiming for the new experience and finding what nobody else has done," she adds.

Upshall, meanwhile, believes "we're at the early stage of expedition cruising".

"What's next? It is the growth. We're at the very tip of the iceberg." ⚓



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Le Bistrot takes a Parisian theme to dazzling heights

UNIWORLD SS JOIE DE VIVRE

Uniworld's Super Ship, SS *Joie de Vivre*, is adorned with the classic Uniworld décor, bringing bright colours and chic furniture – topped off by signature accents inspired by 20th-century Parisian design from the Golden 1920s – to the waterways. Guests can soothe mind and body at the Club L'Esprit spa and wellness centre – which transforms into Claude's, a vibrant bar and entertainment venue, during the evenings – or experience the finest in French cuisine at La Cave Du Vin. Other highlights include Le Bistrot, a Parisian-style café, and the ship's Grand Royal Suite, which features a French balcony and a separate living area.



French chic takes centre stage in the Lounge



Guests can pursue wellness at the Club L'Esprit spa by day



La Cave du Vin offers French cuisine – and wine, of course – *par excellence*



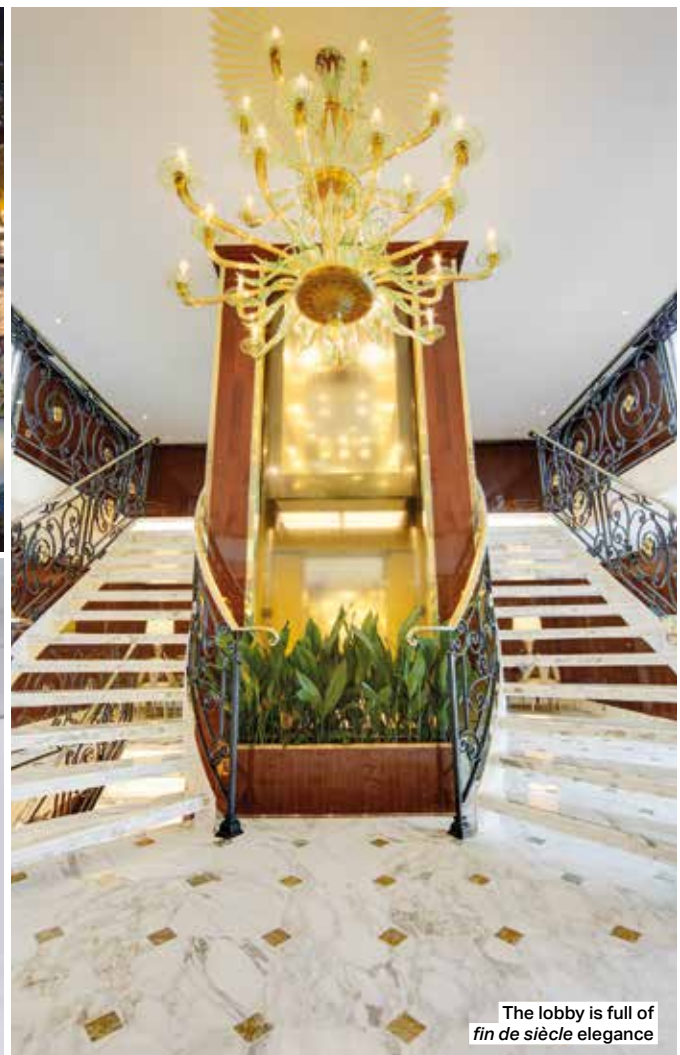
The Grand Royal Suite has a separate sitting room



By night, the spa is transformed into its alter ego, Claude's bar

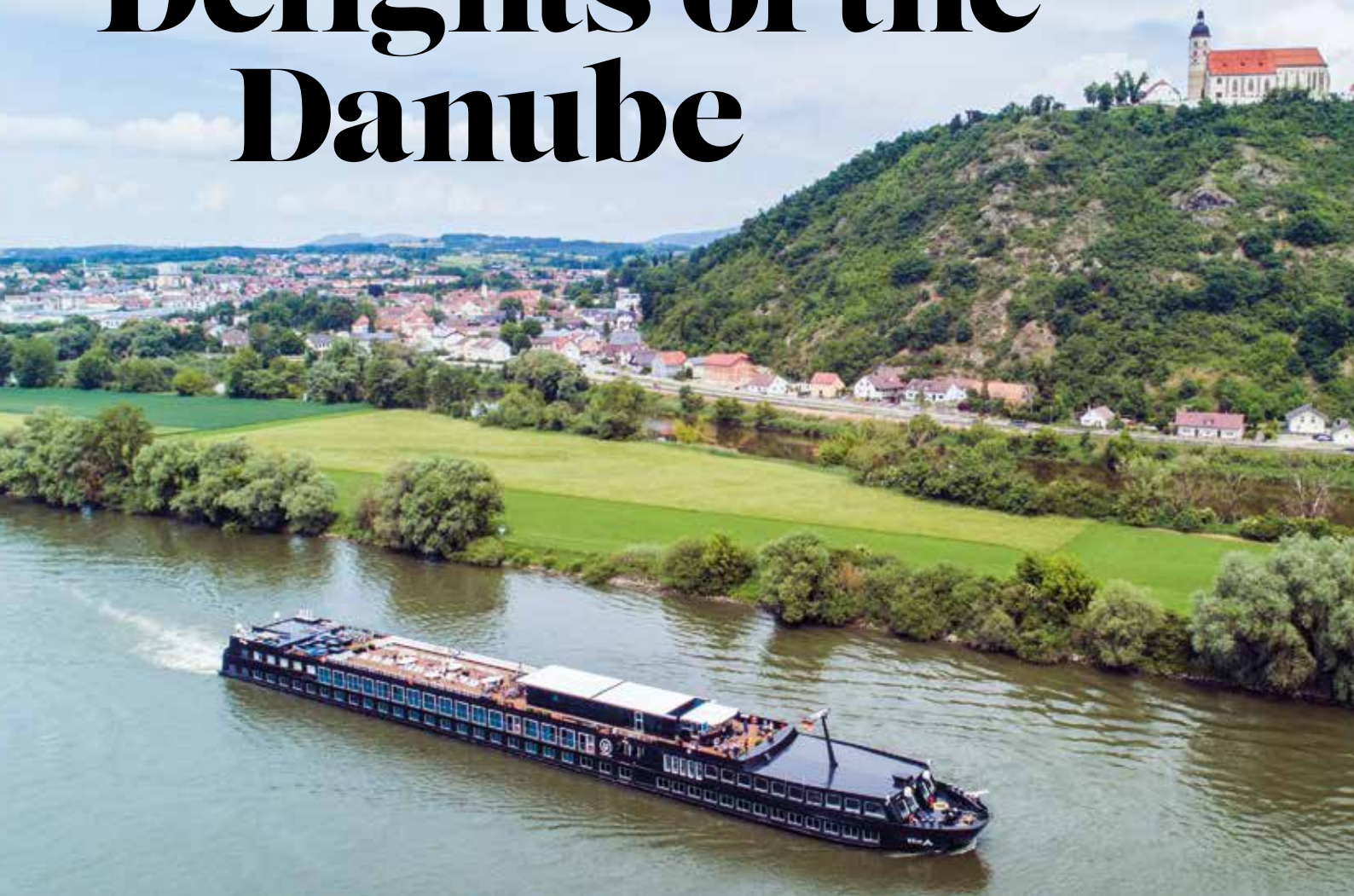


Little touches of luxury abound in the bathrooms



The lobby is full of *fin de siècle* elegance

Delights of the Danube



With new ships and itineraries, there are plenty of reasons for clients to sail on one of Europe's most popular rivers this year, writes **Jeannine Williamson**



The amazing Iron Gate Gorge features on a Uniworld route

Five ships – including the largest all-new river vessel – are making their debuts on the Danube this year. Combined with an increased choice of itineraries and excursions, there has never been a better time for clients to set sail.

The Danube has been one of Europe's most popular river cruising destinations for many years, and with good reason, explains CLIA UK & Ireland director Andy Harmer. Flowing through four capital cities – Vienna, Budapest, Bratislava and Belgrade – from Germany's Black Forest to the Black Sea in Romania, it offers both well-known and more remote destinations.

"Itineraries are varied in duration, ranging from three days to two weeks and longer, and go in both directions, upstream or down, giving agents plenty of itinerary options," says Harmer.

"This makes the Danube perfect for first-time river cruisers, as sailings of less than a week are a

great way to get a taste of what the Danube has to offer.

"The majority of these taster cruises take in the popular city sights of Vienna and Budapest, along with the UNESCO-listed Wachau Valley, one of the most scenic stretches. The varied itineraries also make the Danube appealing to repeat guests, as they can sail the lesser-known areas such as the Danube Delta region", notes Harmer.

NEW SHIPS

The big news, in every sense, is the May unveiling of AmaWaterways' *AmaMagna*. The vessel, double the width of standard river ships, is already accounting for 36 per cent of the line's Danube sales for 2019. Carrying just 196 passengers and with four restaurants, five bars, a pool, watersports platform and private speedboat, the ship is an ideal springboard to introduce ocean clients to river cruising.



The Danube is famed for its spectacular castles



U by Uniworld's *The A* offers holidays for the young at heart



Vienna is one of the jaunts on offer for APT customers

SELLING TIPS

1

One of Europe's most scenic rivers

2

Choice of air, rail and coach travel

3

Multiple options from taster cruises to itineraries of two weeks or more

4

Themed holidays including Dutch bulb field and Christmas market breaks

5

Special interest sailings such as history, music and wine

Riviera Travel has two new Danube ships: the 167-passenger *William Wordsworth* and the boutique 132-guest *George Eliot*, which will feature a fine dining bistro. Geared to UK guests, both ships offer cabins for single occupancy with no supplement. Additionally, Riviera has three dedicated Danube sailings for single travellers with no supplement. The seven-night cruises depart on 1 April, 28 October and 4 November 2019 and lead in at £1,699pp.

Amadeus River Cruises continues to expand with the luxury 164-passenger *Amadeus Star*. It features a wine bar and trademark Amadeus amenities such as a gym and massage room. Itineraries include a six-night Passau round-trip Christmas cruise starting from £1,389pp.

Avalon Envision is the latest addition to Avalon Waterways' suite-ship vessels and will sail on itineraries including the 10-day Danube Dreams, 10-day Legendary Danube and 12-day Blue Danube Discovery. Also new for 2019 is an Avalon adventure host on all European ships to assist with active excursions and activities.

Meanwhile, APT has announced plans for three new ships, with the first sailing on the

European Gems route from Budapest to Amsterdam in 2020.

MORE CHOICE FOR PASSENGERS

The River Cruise Line has introduced an itinerary on *MS Serenity* that, unusually, begins on Romania's Black Sea coast and follows the river back through the heart of Europe, passing through the spectacular Iron Gate Gorge.

The line's sales and business development manager Tim Fleming says: "For anyone looking for a longer trip, something more adventurous and a chance to explore beyond the best-known destinations, a journey through the Danube Delta is an ideal next step."

Uniworld has a new nine-night Authentic Danube & Prague cruise aboard *River Princess*, leading in at £2,499pp, with the option to explore Jewish heritage.

Fellow upmarket line Crystal River Cruises also has a new itinerary based around Jewish history, plus a themed wine cruise with vineyard visits, tastings and food pairings. Tauck has introduced a new festive family cruise, with departures on 22 and 23 December 2019, including a scavenger hunt in Bratislava.

This year APT has added exclusive Signature Experiences to its included excursion programme. Passengers can ride on an atmospheric steam train from Budapest to Godollo Royal Palace and attend a private concert by members of the Mozart Boys' Choir at Vienna's Liechtenstein City Palace.

A-Rosa has begun a multi-million euro ship revamp, and *A-Rosa Donna*, one of the international vessels serving the UK market, is the first – in March – to emerge, with updated cabins, public areas and new Bavarian-themed dining venue.

Meanwhile, Great Rail Journeys has a new fully escorted Danube itinerary with rail travel from London St Pancras included and a flexible à la carte excursion programme. The eight-night trip includes Bratislava, Passau, Melk, Vienna, Budapest and Regensburg leading in at £1,795pp with departures from May to September.

Commenting on the exclusive chartered cruises for Great Rail Journeys customers, product manager for cruises Andy Hawk explains: "This cruise on the Danube takes place on the elegant *Amadeus Queen*. Built in 2018, the ship is sleek and comfortable, and guests can enjoy the serene scenery through specially designed floor-to-ceiling windows, or from the sun deck."

For customers wanting the best of both worlds, you could suggest Saga's From the Dalmatian Coast to the Danube itinerary, combining a six-night Croatia land tour and

River cruising

The River Cruise Line's *Serenity* will take in Budapest on its Danube run



eight-night cruise to Budapest from £2,199pp.

Looking ahead, the Oberammergau Passion Play, staged in the namesake Bavarian town once every decade, takes place in 2020. Uniworld and Viking are among the lines offering special sailings with tickets to the play.

U by Uniworld's striking contemporary ship *The B* is being repositioned from France to Central Europe for the 2020 season and will join sister ship *The A* on the Danube. Full details of the itineraries designed for

young-at-heart clients will be announced soon.

Final word to Janet Parton, sales director at Avalon Waterways, who advises: "The Danube sails through 10 different countries. It pays to know the different destinations on offer as the river takes in four fascinating capital cities and offers great upselling opportunities.

"The scenery and sights are spectacular, so recommend upgrading to a suite to capture and maximise the view. This will heighten the on-board guest experience." ⚓

SELL IT

A-ROSA

Five-night Christmas Markets on the Danube round-trip Engelhartszell itinerary aboard *A-Rosa Donna* departing 2 December 2019 from £1,321pp, including one night's hotel accommodation in Munich and flights, from £1,924pp, including flights. 01942 417822 shearings.com

CRYSTAL RIVER CRUISES

offers a fully inclusive Jewish Heritage themed cruise from Budapest to Vienna departing 10 August 2019 from £3,020pp cruise only, including butler service in every cabin. 020 7399 7604 crystalcruises.co.uk

THE RIVER CRUISE LINE'S

nine-night Treasures along the Danube from the Black Sea cruise departing 27 July and 26 August 2019 on *MS Serenity* starts from £1,395pp, with flights. 01858 435 655 rivercruiseline.co.uk



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• SEINE • DUTCH & BELGIAN WATERWAYS

Royal Clipper

The *Royal Clipper* is a cruise ship like no other. The 227-capacity vessel – operated by Star Clippers – wows guests with its unique mega yacht-style of cruising. On board, *Royal Clipper* is resplendent with amazing features: from luxury cabins to three swimming pools, and hidden balconies on either side of the bow

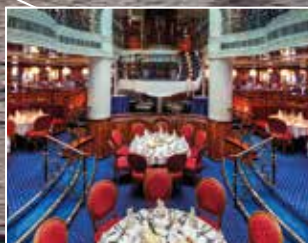
SAILS

The sails are the most notable characteristic of *Royal Clipper*. Five towering masts are rigged with 42 sails, a total of 50,000 square feet of billowing sailcloth, hoisted and lowered with an intricate network of ropes by a dedicated sailing crew, while guests enjoy the thrill of a real sailing experience.



MARINA PLATFORM

Take a dip directly in the ocean from *Royal Clipper*'s clever drop-down 'marina platform'. Sports crew are always on hand to help rig up sailboards, equip guests with life jackets and kayaks, and organise complimentary water skiing when port and sea conditions permit.



RESTAURANT

Sweep down the spiral staircase beneath a glass-ceilinged atrium to dine in the relaxed and elegant atmosphere of *Royal Clipper*'s restaurant. Breakfast and lunch are self service, with huge choices of menu and daily themed lunches according to where the ship is sailing, while dinner is silver service.



TEAK DECKS

Sun-baked teak decks are topped with plunge pools, interspersed with sun beds, and include quiet corners from where to enjoy the ocean, gaze at the stars in the clear night sky or join the officers on the bridge to appreciate the art of sailing the world's largest full-rigged clipper.



TROPICAL BAR

The central Tropical Bar is the social focal point of Star Clippers' ships. It's a place to meet other like-minded guests, enjoy the cocktail of the day, get to know the friendly bar staff and watch the ocean and the land slip by. Its teak and brass fittings and open sides give travellers the impression of being on board a vast VIP yacht.



CABINS

Wake up to the sound of the waves lapping the ship's sides and be rocked to sleep by the gentle movement of the sea. *Royal Clipper's* cabins are sumptuously fitted with gleaming natural wood and ensuite shower rooms. For the ultimate experience, upgrade to a cabin with private veranda and whirlpool bath.



BOWSPRIT NET

The bowsprit net is one of the best vantage points on the ship to enjoy the open sea. When conditions (and officers) permit, guests can lie in the net a few feet above the waves, taking in the sun and the scenery and spotting occasional accompanying dolphins.



DECKTOP POOLS

The decktop pools (there are three on *Royal Clipper*) have plenty of space to refresh and relax, take part in occasional aqua gym sessions, swim against the training rope, or bask in the salty water beneath the towering masts and billowing sails.

FAST FACTS

4,425
tonnage

439
length in feet

106
total crew

227
passenger capacity



Spoilt for choice

With their stunning cocktail of flavours, savours, climates, culture and scenery, the Atlantic islands have plenty to offer cruise passengers, as **Heidi Fuller-Love** explains

Whether it's the wild shores of the Azores, Madeira's subtropical scenery or the sandy beaches and volcanic attractions of the Canary Islands, an Atlantic islands cruise offers dazzling diversity.

With strong links to the old and new, these islands are packed with cultural attractions, ranging from Lanzarote's Underwater Museum to Napoleon's house in St Helena, while food is high on the menu with attractions including Fuerteventura's pungent Cheese Museum and Madeira's sweet-scented Wine Museum.

Seabourn's senior vice-president of global marketing and sales, Chris Austin, says: "Sailing across the Atlantic is a big part of the attraction – it carries you back to the earlier days of cruise travel, which have a very romantic appeal since they

feature a fair number of days at sea, breathing in the salt air as the waves lap at the side of the ship."

Meanwhile, Celebrity Cruises' head of sales UK and Ireland, Nicola McNeish, adds: "*Celebrity Silhouette* also boasts a grass lawn, which means that though guests may be in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, they are always only a few metres away from feeling the earth beneath their feet and can enjoy an array of lawn games and activities."

REMOTE WONDERS

Aside from the Azores and the popular Canary Islands, other Atlantic atolls, such as the Cape Verde Islands and Madeira, are on the itineraries of most of the world's top cruise companies, including Seabourn, P&O Cruises and Norwegian Cruise Line.

The atolls of Ascension and St Helena,



Madeira offers plenty of opportunities to get up close to nature

Left: Las Teresitas in the Canary Islands of Spain is famed for its beach



Santiago is the largest island of Cape Verde, an archipelago off the coast of West Africa

SELLING TIPS

SELL THE DETOX

"Digital detoxification and disconnecting from our devices is becoming an interest area for many travellers, and a transatlantic crossing is certainly a great suggestion for clients seeking this," says Seabourn's Chris Austin.

PROMOTE REPOSITIONING

"Try to get your clients on a repositioning cruise – it's often good value, they'll see more of the world and can even add a cruise-and-stay option to offer more variety. Plus, all of our cruises will be all inclusive from summer 2019, which means all tips and service charges will be part of the deal," says Marella's PR marketing and customer experience manager, Amy Dowling.

APPEAL TO FIRST TIME CRUISERS

"Many Atlantic Island cruises depart from the UK, which is a great recommendation for first-time cruisers looking to experience a wealth of destinations in an easy and affordable way," says Princess Cruises' Tony Roberts.



Even in Lanzarote, guests can get away from it all



The Basilica at Candelaria is one of Tenerife's attractions

famed as the place where French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte died in exile, are also visited by Fred Olsen, Seabourn, Crystal Cruises, Marella Cruises, MSC Cruises and Regent Seven Seas.

From the volcanic landscapes of Lanzarote to the Brazilian ambience of Cape Verde, each island has its own character and its own climate, which is why the majority of Atlantic island cruises are in autumn and spring, although the warmer Canary Islands, which are close to Morocco, are ideal for year-round cruising.

Most ships will visit the popular spots of Tenerife, Gran Canaria, Lanzarote and Fuerteventura, but some cruise lines, including Marella and Seabourn, also stop off at La Gomera, the spectacularly pretty atoll that was 15th-century explorer Christopher Columbus' last port of call before he discovered America.

One of the big advantages of Canary Island itineraries are departures from the UK. These are offered by cruise lines such as Princess Cruises, Saga, Marella, Fred Olsen and others.

"With no luggage limits and no need to fly, it's easy to see why cruises from Southampton are an increasingly popular option for guests of all generations," says Princess Cruises' vice-president for the UK and Europe, Tony Roberts. "Our Canaries itineraries offer late-night departures, giving guests more time ashore to explore the destinations, as well as enjoy a year-round pleasant climate."

Madeira – known as the Pearl of the Atlantic – is famed for year-round balmy weather, stunning scenery and fortified wine. It is on the itinerary list of many transatlantic sailings, as are the Azores, whose volcanic landscapes are dotted with pineapple and coffee plantations.

Islands such as St Helena and its sister atoll, the volcanic isle of Ascension, are famed as being among the world's most remote destinations, and will appeal to more adventurous passengers.

Austin adds: "Clients who enjoy quiet relaxation would be a great target for this kind of trip, where the port calls are fewer but the opportunities for socialising on board are many."

SELL IT – OUR TOP ATLANTIC ISLANDS CRUISE PICKS

WORLDS APART

Viking's 12-day Mid Atlantic Crossing sailing from the Old World to the New departs Lisbon on 16 December 2019, calling at the Azores, Bermuda and Miami. Prices from £2,490pp for a veranda stateroom, including flights. vikingcruises.co.uk.

CANARY GEMS

Seabourn's 14-day Moroccan Gems and Canary Islands cruise departs Lisbon on 17 April 2019, calling at Madeira, Tenerife, El Hierro, Gran Canaria, Lanzarote, Fuerteventura, Casablanca, Tangier, Malaga and Barcelona. From £5,092pp. seabourn.com

WILD AND WARM

Fred Olsen's 35-night Landscapes, Wildlife & Islands of Africa cruise departs Santa Cruz de Tenerife on 10 October 2019, calling at Gran Canaria, Cape Verde, St Helena, and the Seychelles. From £5,799pp, including flights. fredolsencruises.com

FLOWERS AND VOLCANOES

Celebrity Cruises' 10-night round-trip Canary Island cruise departs Southampton on 3 October 2019, calling at Madeira, Tenerife, Lanzarote and Vigo. From £2,500pp for an ocean view stateroom. celebritycruises.co.uk

Gran Canaria mixes appealing villages and dramatic scenery



ATLANTIC AND CARIBBEAN

Star Clippers' 16-day Westbound Atlantic Ocean repositioning cruise leaves Gran Canaria on 8 November 2019, calling at La Gomera and Barbados. From £764pp. starclippers.co.uk

ISLANDS IN THE SUN

Princess Cruises' 11-night round trip Canary Island cruise departs Southampton on 8 October 2019, calling at Vigo, Madeira, Tenerife, Gran Canaria and Lanzarote. Prices from £949pp for an inside stateroom. princess.com

AZORES AND MORE

P&O Cruises' 16-night Azores, Canary Islands and Portugal round-trip leaves Southampton on 30 May 2019, calling at the Azores, Madeira, Gran Canaria, Lanzarote, Lisbon. Prices from £1,549pp for an outside sea view cabin. pocruises.com

LISBON DELIGHTS

Cunard's 12-night The Canary Islands cruise round-trip leaves Southampton on 4 November 2019, calling at Madeira, La Palma, Gran Canaria, Lanzarote and Lisbon. Prices from £1,690pp for an inside cabin. cunard.co.uk ⚓

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July 26, 2019

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Every booking you make by March 31, 2019 is automatically entered into our weekly prize draw to win VIP Race Day tickets, and see Madness on May 17 at Aintree or Rudimental on July 26, 2019 at Newmarket. Holidays departing in 2019 qualify for two entries. The prize is not transferable. For terms and conditions visit <https://www.sagaagents.co.uk/trade/incentives.aspx>. Saga holidays are for anyone aged 50+. A travel companion may be 40+. NHA-SC1763.

What's in a name?

From West End shows to luxury labels, big brand names at sea can help sell cruises.

Jeannine Williamson reports

Entertainment, dining and tax-free shopping are among the top on-board attractions on cruise ships and in recent years their appeal has become even more attractive as companies partner with a star-studded line-up of famous names.

World-class musicals, celebrity chefs and luxury brands including Dom Perignon, Tag Heuer, Swarovski and Calvin Klein – to name just a few – can all be found at sea and used to entice both seasoned and new-to-cruise clients.

"Cruise lines incorporate famous brand names in all aspects of on-board life, from theatre shows to restaurants, spas and shops," says CLIA UK & Ireland director Andy Harmer. "This offers great value and special interest connections to guests, a fantastic selling tool for agents."

"While on their cruise holiday, guests could see their favourite Broadway show, dine in a five-star restaurant, relax in a luxury-brand health spa, or purchase their favourite jewellery and cosmetics without paying the land-based price."

"Incorporating well-known brands on ships provides a great opportunity to increase travel agents' market reach. The brand partnerships can help agents break down cruise holidays into experiences that their new-to-cruise clients can relate to."

CURTAINS UP

Jersey Boys, *Rock of Ages* and *Priscilla Queen of the Desert* are among the

musicals at sea premiered by Norwegian Cruise Line, and the razzle-dazzle continues with *Kinky Boots* recently announced as the headline act on *Norwegian Encore*, which launches in November this year.

The line's president and chief executive officer, Andy Stuart says: "*Kinky Boots* showcases the evolution of the unforgettable experiences we are dedicated to providing our guests. We are very excited to be the first to feature this award-winning musical at sea."

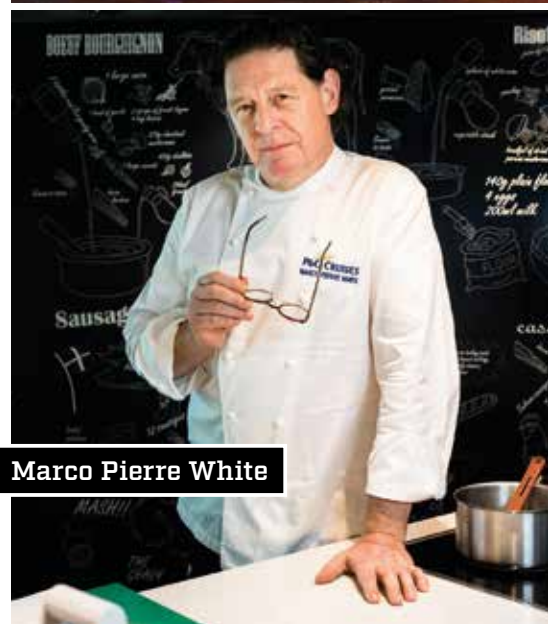
Since 2017 MSC Cruises has been thrilling passengers with Cirque du Soleil shows staged in specially created €20 million Carousel Lounges on its Meraviglia-class ships. The shows are exclusively choreographed for MSC and two brand new shows, *Syma – Sail beyond Imagination* and *Varelia – Love in Full Colour*, have been created for MSC *Bellissima*, the line's newest flagship coming into service this March.

Silversea hits the high notes through its association with the acclaimed Italian opera house La Scala. The line is hosting opera-themed cruises in 2019, giving aficionados a unique opportunity to deepen their knowledge and passion. The sailings showcase performances by four singers and a pianist from La Scala with the chance to meet the performers at cocktail parties along with lectures on the recital programme and Q&A sessions.

On its expedition voyages Silversea also joins forces with The Royal Geographical Society to enhance the



Kinky Boots



Marco Pierre White

SELL IT

CARNIVAL CRUISE LINE

Five-night Western Caribbean round-trip Miami sailing on *Carnival Horizon* in partnership with Hasbro, departing 18 August 2019 from £2,319 for a family of four, including \$50 on-board credit.
carnival.co.uk

PONANT

offers an eight-night Andalusia and Balearic islands Lisbon to Civitavecchia cruise in partnership with Christie's on the new *Le Bougainville* departing 21 June 2019 from £3,799pp.
ponant.com

P&O CRUISES

has a seven-night Norwegian Fjords cruise on *Britannia* departing 29 June 2019 from £749pp, with the option to join Marco Pierre White on a Stavanger shore excursion to visit a local farm and take part in a cookery class.
pandocruises.com



Lego



Cirque du Soleil

SELLING TIPS

1

World-class entertainment included in cruise fare or at a fraction of land-based cost

2

Opportunity to meet and mingle with celebrities

3

Artistic and operatic sailings that will appeal to culture-loving clients

4

Suggest luxury food experiences for birthdays, anniversaries and other special occasions

5

Tried-and-trusted names in children's activities

on-board enrichment by sharing knowledge collated by the society from centuries of scientific exploration in remote areas.

Other cultural cruise line links include Ponant's partnership with the famous Christie's auction house. Themed sailings include art gallery tours and, on some itineraries, visits to Christie's auction houses. One of this year's on-board guest speakers is Stephen S Lash, vice chairman of Christie's American advisory board.

FOOD AND DRINK

Renowned British chef Marco Pierre White has been named as the new patron of The Cookery Club on P&O Cruises' flagship *Britannia*. This year the line has launched a unique series of shore excursions with Marco and fellow Food Heroes patissier Eric Lanlard and wine expert Olly Smith, to take passengers on culinary journeys of discovery in Norway.

P&O Cruises' president Paul Ludlow

says: "We love to eat well at P&O Cruises, and pride ourselves on offering a huge range of dining experiences, from casual, contemporary dishes to fine dining, that will appeal to all discerning foodies."

"Our Food Heroes cruises go one step further and provide guests with a unique opportunity to meet, spend time with and pick the brains of, some of the best chefs and wine experts in the land, while enjoying a truly memorable holiday."

What's more, Oceania Cruises recently unveiled its Dom Perignon Experience, which is available to only 24 guests at a time and pairs a six-course gourmet meal with different vintages from the world-famous champagne house.

"This is a totally new concept that is exclusive to Oceania Cruises," says president and CEO Bob Binder. "We worked with the team at Dom Perignon to pair the perfect champagnes with the perfect flavours and the outcome is

spectacular. *Marina* and *Riviera* will be the only places in the world for travellers to enjoy this experience."

Finally, the brand fun is not just confined to adult cruisers, as MSC has forged partnerships with Lego and Chicco for its kids' clubs, enabling youngsters to enjoy educational and age-appropriate play sessions.

Carnival Cruise Line also has an exclusive collaboration with Dr Seuss Enterprises and offers Seuss at Sea for young children with programming that incorporates Dr Seuss characters such as the Cat in the Hat along with Dr Seuss books, toys and themed activities.

Furthermore, Carnival has a partnership with Hasbro, and older children and teens can take part in Hasbro, The Game Show, in which they team up with friends and family to win prizes in front of an audience. Games include giant versions of Yahtzee Bowling and Connect 4 Basketball. ⚓

Get into ship-shape

Here's how your passengers can make sure they're on board with wellness

The stereotypical concept of a cruise revolves around copious amounts of buffet-style food and alcoholic beverages galore thanks to those all-inclusive drinks packages. In fact, most cruise passengers put on weight during the course of their holiday thanks to serious over-indulgence on the eating front and a lack of regular exercise (the bars on board tending to prove more popular than the gym).

However, more recently the concept of wellness at sea has started to gain traction. Holland America Line, for instance, has partnered with *O, The Oprah Magazine*, to deliver a range of wellness activities such as morning meditation sessions and classes on healthy eating, as well as beauty sessions.

Over at Seabourn they have teamed up with Dr Andrew Weil, the founder and director of the University of Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine in Tucson, to create a spa and wellness programme. A certified yoga and meditation practitioner inspires and educates guests through various complimentary classes during the voyage. The line claims this offers a cruise experience that is "further enhanced by a holistic mind and body perspective".

If it's the toll that all that fantastic on-board cuisine could take on your waistline that concerns your customers, they may be interested to learn that MSC Cruises has teamed up with WW (formerly Weight Watchers) to offer a 'Voyage to Wellbeing'.

Cooking demonstrations are provided, while a variety of classes – from cardio dance to Pilates – allow guests to work out while they cruise. Wellness seminars also make an appearance, and the whole concept is tailored to appeal to the calorie-conscious.

For passengers on *Celebrity Cruises*, personal training keeps weight on an even keel



Healthy restaurant choices can be part of the package if guests are following a fitness plan

In the cruise detailed below, the *Celebrity Millennium* offers a number of fitness and health services at its Canyon Ranch Spa Club, including personal training sessions, yoga classes, hot stone massages and facials. In addition, a Bodystat Body Composition Analysis provides guests with an overall idea of their hydration level and body make-up, listing fat, muscle and bone percentages. A fitness professional will then put together a personalised regime for both cardio and strength training.

Meanwhile, Blu is the private dining venue with spa-style dishes that specialises in 'clean cuisine', a way of preparing food that's fresh and inventive, using alternatives to heavy sauces, for example. ⚓

	ITINERARY	DESTINATIONS VISITED	FACILITIES	ACCOMMODATION	DINING	PRICE
CRUISE	14 nights South East Asia on board the <i>Celebrity Millennium</i>	Hong Kong, Vietnam, Thailand and Singapore	Canyon Ranch Spa Club (see details above), theatre shows, art gallery, rooftop terrace showing open-air movies, Cellar Masters for drinks, the Cosmos Lounge for dancing	The serene AquaClass Staterooms are perfect for those seeking restoration	Big choice of options, including the main dining room, sushi bar, plus spa-style cuisine at Blu (see above)	From £3,875 per person*
VS						
LAND-BASED HOLIDAY	14 nights Banyan Tree	Bangkok and Koh Samui	Swimming pool, fitness centre, steam room, sauna, spa, gallery, cookery classes. The Banyan Tree's spas are well known for their holistic approach to wellness	Horizon rooms in Bangkok have great views; in Samui all the villas have their own private pool	Al fresco rooftop dining, nouvelle Cantonese Cuisine, signature Thai dishes, Asian and Western offerings	From £5,292 per person**

*Includes gratuities and Classic drinks package. **Includes a complimentary one-hour Rainforest Hydrotherapy experience for two people, exclusive for Kuoni guests

Itineraries provided courtesy of Kuoni Travel – discover more at kuoni.co.uk



"With Celestyal, it is about the destinations: some tours visit seven"

Jo Reid, country manager UK at Celestyal Cruises, explains why the *Celestyal Crystal* has a special place in her heart, and relives a shoe-related mishap

Why is your cruise line the best?

Sailing with Celestyal means guests can experience the best the Aegean has to offer. We visit incredible islands in beautiful sunshine, supplemented by an attentive crew and authentic, scrumptious cuisine. What's not to love?

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

George Clooney. He is a humanitarian, very honest and does a lot of work for charity. He has an authentic side and has stayed true to his roots, just like Celestyal has with its Aegean roots.

How long have you worked for your cruise line?

I joined Celestyal as UK & Ireland country manager in February 2018. Prior to this role, I have worked for numerous other cruise lines, including P&O Cruises, Cunard, Princess Cruises, and Seabourn. I joined the cruise industry in 2001 when I was 21 years old – please do not do the maths!

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

It wasn't particularly funny to me, but I think other people certainly found it so. I was walking to a meeting in Southampton and the heel broke on my new shoe. Not only did I fall to the ground, but I let out a silly scream so everyone in the vicinity turned round to see me landing in a very unladylike fashion. It did give me a good excuse later to go and buy some new shoes, though, so it wasn't all bad.



Like Celestyal, actor George Clooney exudes authenticity

Santorini is just one of Jo's 'incredible islands in beautiful sunshine'



What's the strangest thing you've ever been asked about cruise?

"What happens to the ice carvings on board after they have melted?" and "is the hot tub heated?"

Do you have a favourite ship in the fleet?

I love the *Celestyal Crystal* and I'm not the only one. Jane McDonald has sailed on this ship twice as part of her Channel 5 series, *Cruising with Jane McDonald*. The ship is obviously a very important part of every cruise, but with Celestyal I believe it is more about the destinations. Our itineraries are incredible and very port intensive – on our four-night Iconic Aegean sailing guests visit no fewer than seven ports.

Which on-board restaurant do you prefer and why?

It is not an on-board restaurant as such, but I absolutely love the Greek BBQ we host out on deck in the evening. We have local Greek musicians and dancers who encourage everyone to learn Greek dancing. The food is absolutely incredible.

Which port would you prefer to disembark at and what would you do?

This is a very hard question as I honestly love all the Greek Islands. However, if I



Jo once had to reassure a guest that the hot tub on board was in fact heated

really had to choose it would be watching the sunset in Santorini with a cheeky gin and tonic, or shopping in Mykonos.

And where would you opt to stay on board and why?

I would opt to stay on board in Kusadasi, only because I have visited the ancient site of Ephesus many times (and love it).

Which cruise is on your wish list?

It was Alaska and I am happy to say I have done it and it was incredible. Lately I've developed a bit of a taste for river cruising, especially the Christmas markets.

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

I love this industry, but if I really had to leave I would be a photographer. ⚓

Six of the best... Sports cruises



Whether it's a casual coast walk or a golf extravaganza, there are itineraries to satisfy even the most sports-mad of cruisers. **Gary Peters** reports

STREET RACER

Cruises that take in the Monaco Grand Prix are relatively well known and popular. However, despite all the excitement that Monte Carlo undoubtedly involves, the Singapore Grand Prix – Asia's first street circuit – is an exhilarating night race illuminated by the stunning backdrop of neck-aching skyscrapers. Combine a cruise and land holiday departing 11 September 2019 with two nights in Bali, a seven-night cruise on the *Star Clipper* cruise ship, and a three-night post-cruise stay in Singapore. Prices start from £3,489pp.

CRUISE AND WALK

For more than 10 years, Ramblers Walking Holidays has organised cruise and walk holidays in partnership with **Fred Olsen Cruise Lines**. There are sailings to various destinations, from the Norwegian fjords to the Canary Islands to Indonesia, all designed to introduce travellers to the benefits of walking excursions – it doesn't always have to be about high-octane sport. The 17-night Cape Town to the Seychelles trip departs 31 October 2019 on *Boudicca*. Prices start from £4,195pp.



A treat awaits guests among the night riders at the Singapore Grand Prix



The Soufflenheim course near Baden-Baden could mean golf nirvana



Uniworld is offering a river cruise plus cycling option



Heroes of the pitch will feature on CMV's Cricketing Legends tour

TEE TIME

Sail the serene Danube with **AmaWaterways** and sample the line's concierge golf programme, which includes a choice of excursions and up to five rounds of golf at some of the leading championship courses on the continent, such as Albatross Golf Club in Prague and Penati Country Club, Slovakia. This comprehensive package really does go the extra mile for those who dream of putting like a pro. Prices from £5,100pp for a 10-night golf and river cruise package, departing 15 August 2019 on *AmaViola*.

BOWLED OVER BY CMV

Cruise and Maritime Voyages is well known for its themed cruises and the Cricketing Legends itinerary is quite possibly one of the best. Guests are joined by some of the game's leading names for a series of on-board lectures, giveaways and meet and greets. The next Cricketing Legends cruise to Norway departs from Tilbury on 3 November 2019. Prices start from £414pp.

THE WIDE WORLD OF SPORTS

While not a specific itinerary or sport, the Wide World of Sports deck, on **Disney's** *Disney Magic* and *Disney Wonder* ships, is a smorgasbord of options, housing basketball courts, ping pong tables, shuffleboard and a running track. It's a great place for cruisers of all ages, as well as those who simply want to watch others sweat it out on court while enjoying panoramic views of the ocean.

ON YOUR BIKE

Uniworld has partnered with tour operator Butterfield & Robinson to offer a series of cruise biking tours. Expert guides are on hand to advise guests, and bikes are available for use at no extra charge. Combining a river cruise with a cycling element is a great way for guests to really delve into the heart of a destination and provides a nice change of pace to an itinerary. The seven-night Rhone river cruise biking sailing departs 28 July 2019, on the *SS Catherine*. Prices start from approximately £6,000pp. ⚓



Did you know? Viking's 2020 river cruises are now on sale from £1,195pp

With the world's largest fleet of innovative river ships – including our multi-award-winning Viking Longships – only Viking can promise your clients more. More comfort, more quality, more style and more choice of cruises across Europe, Russia and Asia. Relax in spacious, contemporary surroundings. Indulge in fabulous, destination-inspired food and thoughtfully selected wines. Explore the cultures and customs of the places visited on expertly led tours. And discover a unique and exciting new view of the world.

GREAT VIKING VALUE – SO MUCH INCLUDED

- ✓ Return scheduled flights from London and a choice of up to 14 regional airports at no extra cost
- ✓ River-view stateroom
- ✓ All meals on board including wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner
- ✓ Free Wi-Fi on board*
- ✓ An included excursion in almost every port
- ✓ Free tea, coffee and snacks any time on board
- ✓ All port charges, government taxes and overseas transfers
- ✓ Onboard gratuities

2020 RIVER CRUISES

Portugal's River of Gold

10 days, 8 guided tours
Departing March to November 2020

From £1,595pp

Elegant Elbe

10 days, 7 guided tours
Departing March to November 2020

From £1,995pp

Rhine Getaway

8 days, 6 guided tours
Departing March to December 2020

From £1,495pp

Danube Waltz

8 days, 6 guided tours
Departing March to November 2020

From £1,195pp

Romantic Danube

8 days, 6 guided tours
Departing April to December 2020

From £1,495pp

Passage to Eastern Europe

11 days, 7 guided tours
Departing March to November 2020

From £1,945pp

Châteaux, Rivers & Wine

8 days, 7 guided tours
Departing March to November 2020

From £1,495pp

Lyon & Provence

8 days, 7 guided tours
Departing March to November 2020

From £1,495pp

Imperial Jewels of China

15 days, 11 guided tours
Departing March to November 2020

From £3,045pp

Magnificent Mekong

17 days, 16 guided tours
Departing January to December 2020

From £3,195pp

Waterways of the Tsars

13 days, 10 guided tours
Departing May to October 2020

From £2,795pp

Kiev, Black Sea & Bucharest

12 days, 10 guided tours
Departing May to September 2020

From £2,895pp

Call now on 020 8780 7985 or visit vikingcruises.co.uk

Prices correct at time of going to print but are subject to availability and change. From prices are per person and based on two people sharing the lowest grade stateroom available, departing on selected dates in 2020. Prices valid until 31 March 2019. Single supplements apply. Please note on selected cruises a visa may be required and is at the passengers own expense. *Restrictions apply. Gratuities included on board ship only. For more information please visit vikingcruises.co.uk/terms-conditions or call us.





Homeward bound

Viking's Homelands cruise is a true celebration of all things Scandi and a brilliant introduction to Russia and the Baltic. **Josh Stephenson** reports

The fourth day of my cruise aboard *Viking Sea* brings us to St Petersburg, the port I'd most looked forward to before embarkation. And, judging by first impressions, it's everything I'd hoped for – the architecture, the atmosphere and the feeling of history.

At this stage, we are waiting to pass customs – travellers to Russia usually require a visa, but cruise ship passengers are allowed to stay three

days visa-free, as long as they are accompanied by a guide.

The real delights are still to come, however, and soon I find myself in the shadow of St Petersburg's most celebrated sight – The Church of the Saviour on Spilled Blood – so named because this was the spot where Tsar Alexander II was murdered by political activists in 1881.

The interior is every bit as jaw-dropping, with more than 7,500 square

metres of mosaics depicting religious scenes, and a jewel-encrusted shrine built on the very spot where the Tsar met his death.

A refined ship

Often referred to as the Venice of the North, St Petersburg is a city laced with waterways and, while the experience may be a little touristy, a boat ride offers the chance to see it from a unique perspective.

Visitors can visit the Winter Palace and >

THE ITINERARY

STOCKHOLM

The Swedish capital is spread across 14 islands and charms with its medieval streets, parks and promenades.

TALLINN

It's all about the Old Town in Tallinn, a short walk away from the port. Guests can find an abundance of attractions, including medieval-styled pubs and shops.

HELSINKI

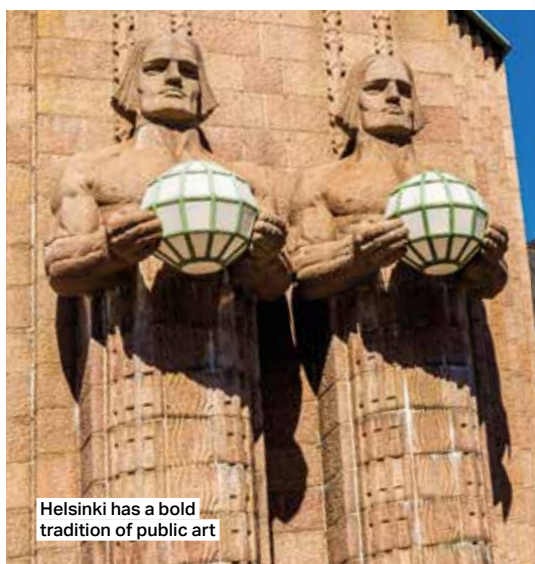
A bustling city that is small enough for guests to comfortably see the main points of attraction on foot. The central railway station is particularly popular among tourists.

ST PETERSBURG

The second-largest city in Russia after Moscow, St Petersburg is home to the world-famous Hermitage Museum.



Flexible dining choices include The Restaurant



Helsinki has a bold tradition of public art



Viking Sea's Explorers Lounge provides a panorama – and cosy rugs

the Hermitage Museum – home to countless pieces of art – as well as the Summer Palace of Peter the Great (Tsar from 1682 to 1725). An excursion can also include the Mariinsky Theatre and the Fabergé Museum.

However, before our arrival in St Petersburg, my Viking Homelands itinerary had already provided many wonders, not least the ship, *Viking Sea*.

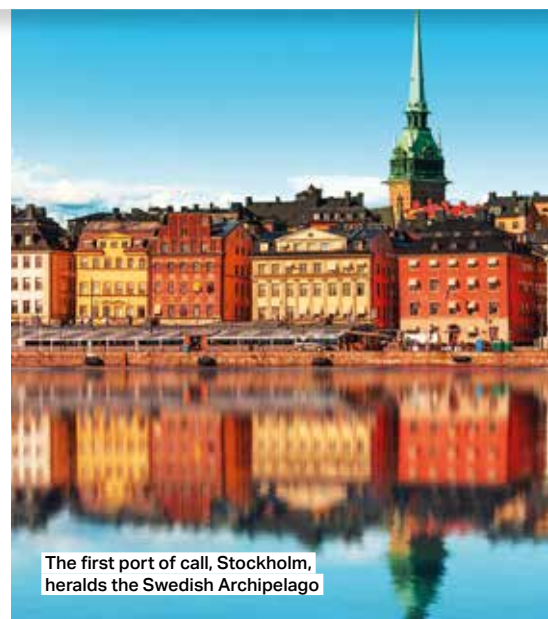
With accommodation for just 930 guests, this is refined small-ship cruising at its best. The decor is Scandi-chic: clean, elegant and uncluttered, from the public areas to the cabins, every one of which has a balcony.

There's also plenty to keep people occupied around the ship, from the infinity pool to daily talks held in The Theatre on Deck 2 to Scrabble in the Viking Living Room.

There's also a range of entertainment, from a pianist in the top-deck panoramic lounge, or the resident band, whose old-school soul classics got the dancefloor jumping in nightclub Torshavn.

In terms of restaurants, *Viking Sea* has some of the finest afloat. The main dining room is superb, and the option to turn up at any time during service without a reservation is a nice touch.

The two speciality restaurants, The Chef's Table and Manfredi's, are also sublime and – better still – are included in the fare. Manfredi's steaks tick the box but for me The Chef's Table steals the show, offering a five-course fine-dining exploration of each country we visit. Best of all is a bowl of tender lamb *fårikål* (lamb and steamed cabbage, essentially) to celebrate the cuisine of our first port of call, Stockholm.



The first port of call, Stockholm, heralds the Swedish Archipelago



The Aquavit Terrace offers uninterrupted sea views

SELLING HIGHLIGHTS

- 1**
Stunning scenery is guaranteed in Scandinavia
- 2**
Unique local cultures
- 3**
History and art in abundance
- 4**
Small-ship cruising at its best
- 5**
Flexible dining on board Viking ships



The Spa demonstrates the best of Scandi chic



Every cabin on *Viking Sea* has a balcony



After leaving Stockholm, the ship sails through the Swedish Archipelago – which has to be one of the majestic moments in cruising.

With 30,000 islands, skerries and rocks making up 80km of picturesque seascape, it is a joy to sit on the top deck and pick out the small, brightly coloured summer houses of the people lucky enough to have a home here.

A local delicacy

Next comes Helsinki – the gleaming Finnish capital quickly wins me over. I love the Moomin cafés, celebrating the children's characters of local author and artist Tove Jansson, and I am mightily impressed by the huge Art Nouveau railway station and the Byzantine architectural styling of the dramatic Uspenski Cathedral.

I can also recommend a stroll along the Esplanadi – think of it as a Finnish version of Manhattan's Central Park – where cafés and boutique shops mix with a welcome splash of greenery.

Our tour guide explains that an authentic slice of Finland can be found in the Old Market Hall, where locals and visitors tuck into slices of reindeer. This is a delicacy in Finland and is served in a range of styles.

And, with that, *Viking Sea* turns east across the Gulf of Finland for my final destination and hoped-for highlight, the city of St Petersburg. ⚓

SELL IT

Viking Homeland itineraries visit eight countries and have multiple sailing dates. Prices from £4,640pp.

BENCHMARK YOUR BUSINESS

Smart companies understand that employee engagement and retention has become a real corporate game-changer. That's why *Cruise Trade News* has partnered with Best Companies Group to discover the best places to work in the cruise industry.

Registration is now open and travel agencies selling cruise holidays, cruise lines and suppliers to the industry are all eligible to participate. Entry is completely free of charge and you can register until 27 September; simply visit the dedicated website at CTNBestCompanies.com for further details.

The recipients of the Best Companies accolades will be announced at the Wave Awards in central London in March 2020.



DESTINATION SPECIAL

WINTER SUN WITH IONA

P&O Cruises' new ship *Iona* will take in a number of winter sun destinations during its inaugural winter season.

Between October 2020 and March 2021, *Iona* will sail south to Spain, Portugal and the Canary Islands, and visit a range of cities in northern Europe, on seven and 14-night itineraries.

There are also late departures from Barcelona, Valencia, Tenerife and Fuerteventura, as well as overnight stays in Barcelona, Lisbon, Cadiz and Rotterdam.

Ports of call in Spain, Portugal and the Canaries include Cadiz, Fuerteventura, Gran Canaria, Lanzarote, Lisbon, Madeira, Tenerife, Alicante, Barcelona, Gibraltar, Malaga, Valencia and Vigo.

Itineraries go on sale on 18 March.



In Lisbon there's a chance to see the city's spectacular Monument to the Discoveries



58 **Hotlist**

The latest news from the hottest places on the planet

60 **Bali**

Focus on the Indonesian haven

63 **Stockholm**

Sweden's capital in the spotlight

The fabled Northeast Passage

Crystal Expedition Cruises' new luxury yacht *Crystal Endeavor* will sail the Northeast Passage.

The 28-day cruise departs 18 August 2021. Guests will enjoy one-night pre-cruise hotel accommodation in Anchorage and a flight transfer to Anadyr on embarkation day.

En route, *Crystal Endeavor* will sail the East Siberian Sea, the White Sea, the Barents Sea and the Laptev Sea.

"The Northeast Passage is precisely the type of bold expedition for which *Crystal Endeavor* is designed, with her PC6 designation and the ability to manoeuvre through medium first-year ice, along with offshore dynamic positioning, zodiacs and virtually all other gear necessary for such intrepid exploration," said Crystal president and CEO Tom Wolber.

"In addition to these technical amenities, she'll accommodate guests in the highest standard of comfort and luxury, even as they travel to the most remote destinations."

The 200-guest *Crystal Endeavor* launches in August 2020.



Crystal Endeavor is built for polar exploration



Ancient Budapest stars on the *Explorer* route

A Scenic cruise on the Danube

Scenic has unveiled a new eight-day *Danube Explorer* itinerary, priced at £2,895pp, based on twin sharing.

The cruise, along the Lower Danube, links two of Eastern Europe's most fascinating capitals, Budapest and Belgrade.

Guests can immerse themselves in the local culture during the cruise, such a home-cooked meal with a local family in Croatia.

The cruise departs on 14 and 21 October 2020.

Passengers can explore the ice caves in the Mendenhall Glacier, Juneau, Alaska

Seabourn ups ante in Alaska

Seabourn has introduced new seven and 14-day itineraries for its 2020 Alaska and British Columbia season.

The 10 seven-day cruises will travel northbound and southbound between Vancouver and Juneau, and each can be combined to create a 14-day round-trip cruise.

There are optional Ventures by

Seabourn, including guided kayak, Zodiac and hiking tours, as well as shore excursions and pre- and post-cruise Seabourn Journeys.

Seabourn president Richard Meadows said: "Our range of itineraries from seven to 14-day cruises are a great option for a busy generation, and through our

Ventures by Seabourn, local shore excursion experiences and Seabourn Journeys guided excursions, guests are put right in front of the vast wilderness landscape."

Itineraries for the 2020 season are open for booking now. The first voyage sets sail from Vancouver on 12 June 2020.

Oceania's 'landmark' global itinerary



Oceania Cruises will take guests on an epic 180-day world cruise in 2021. The voyage, on *Insignia*, will visit 100 ports of call in 44 countries. The cruise departs Miami on 9 January 2021 and finishes in New York on 9 July 2021.

Oceania president and CEO Bob Binder said: "This is a landmark itinerary for Oceania Cruises. Guests sail the world with us to experience extensive and all-encompassing itineraries. This world cruise is particularly exciting." Prices start from £34,229pp.

Highlights include:

- Six continents
- 100 ports
- 125 UNESCO World Heritage Sites
- Three days in Yangon, Myanmar
- Three days in Istanbul, Turkey
- Additional overnight stays include Bora Bora, Cairns, Hong Kong, Saigon, Bangkok, Singapore, Mumbai, Dubai, Luxor, Jerusalem, Venice, Lisbon, Seville and Bordeaux

Dance to France

Guests can join Saga on a four-night taster cruise to three of France's most-loved destinations.

The sailing, on *Spirit of Discovery* – the line's new boutique ship – departs 3 October 2019 and visits Le Havre, St Malo and Cherbourg. Prices start from £849pp.

The itinerary focuses heavily on entertainment on board the ship in a range of venues, such as The Club by Jools Holland, a steak restaurant and live music venue; The Playhouse, a 420-seat theatre that is home to the ship's resident performance company; and the Britannia Lounge, which will offer live music, dancing and a variety of guest entertainers.

Saga is offering a refund to guests who are not satisfied with the cruise.



Island of the gods

Bali's year-round tropical climate, countless temples, beautiful beaches and natural wonders make it a must-visit destination, as **Lisa James** explains

There can't be many who aren't enticed by the idea of visiting Bali.

One of the 'ten thousand islands' of Indonesia, exotic Bali is often referred to as the Island of Gods – not just because of its spellbinding temples, but also because it's blessed with outstanding beaches and wonderful, enchanting people.

Beyond the beaches, visitors will find centuries-old villages surrounded by cascading rice terraces and areas of outstanding natural beauty. At eight degrees south of the equator, Bali has a year-round tropical, warm and

humid climate with two main seasons – dry and rainy.

However, clients planning to venture inland should be advised to pack something warm and waterproof, as temperatures in the volcanic peaks are cooler and it's more likely to rain.

PORT VIEW

Cruise ships operate in and out of Benoa port, which is 10km from Ngurah Rai International Airport and 12km from the capital, Denpasar.

Passengers don't need to go far to get a sneak preview of what awaits, as they'll probably be greeted at the dock by

Balinese dancers and people selling traditional batik and wood arts and crafts.

Taxis operate from the port into Denpasar and the beaches of Nusa Dua and Kuta, as well as Bali's cultural centre, Ubud. Visitors can hire taxis for several hours, but should be aware that travelling by road can be a slow process, so it's wise to leave plenty of time to get back to the port.

Several cruise itineraries include one or more overnight ports of call in Bali so guests can get the most out of this wonderful piece of paradise, sampling its exotic food or simply watching the world go by while sipping a Bintang beer. ➤



Pura Ulun Danu Beratan, on the shores of Lake Bratan, is one of the major temples of the Shaivite Hindus



The wax-resist batik process is just one of Indonesia's fascinating crafts



Guests may find that the Nusa Dua beaches tick all their boxes



Balinese dancers could be one of the first sights that await passengers on arrival

Sightseeing highlights

BEACHES

Bali's coastal resorts regularly make the world's best beach lists, with Kuta Beach perhaps the most well known. Crowds have been enticed by its pure white sand and spectacular sunsets for years, making it a must-see, despite the fact that it's busy. Also popular is Nusa Dua, the resort region on the Bali Sea coast. One of Bali's trendiest beaches is Seminyak, a chic, grey-sand resort with lots of restaurants, bars and boutique outlets – and one of the island's best sunsets. Honeymoon couples will love secluded Balangan, while Jimbaran is a fishing village with seafood restaurants.

TEMPLES

The region of Ubud is popular for its cultural and religious sites. In fact, the whole of the island is dotted with so many temples that tourists are bound to pay a visit to at least one. Pura Tanah Lot is one of the island's most popular attractions, overlooking the Bali Sea, where a visit at sunset turns the iconic attraction into an unforgettable silhouette. Pura Besakih, the oldest and holiest on the island, is actually a complex of 23 temples on the slopes of Mount Agung, the biggest of which is Pura Penataran Agung. The colourful Batuan Temple is considered one of the finest and oldest in Bali, while Uluwatu Temple is home to mischievous monkeys and Tirta Empul is popular for its holy water springs.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

Bali is known for its batik fabric and tours are available to villages to see skilled craftspeople using different techniques and colours to create the unique patterns of this beautiful material. The island is also known for its wood carving, painting, and gold and silver works. A tour to Kemenuh village, for example, will showcase local craftsmen turning teak or ebony into ornaments and masks. The Pasifika Museum has work by local artists. Many tours also include a traditional Balinese dance performance and visitors are often invited to join in.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL PHENOMENA

Bali's five-acre Bird Park is not only a sanctuary for 1,000 species, with the largest collection of Indonesian birds in the world, as well as many varieties from Africa and South America, but its flora and fauna attract many colourful butterflies too. A popular trip is to Mount Batur volcano, where it's possible to climb to the top to get a panoramic view of the huge, 14km-diameter crater the volcano sits in and the magnificent Batur Lake next to it.

WHO SAILS IN?

Fred Olsen

14-night Indonesian Island Discovery on *Boudicca* departs Phuket on 28 November 2019, has an overnight in Singapore and ends with two nights in Bali. Prices from £2,999pp, including flights.

Silversea

15-day Darwin to Bali expedition cruise on *Silver Discoverer* includes all shore excursions, as well as premium drinks and gratuities on board.

Prices from £9,900pp, including flights, departing 24 June 2019.

Intrepid Travel

Seven-night Indonesian Island Cruise on board the

49-passenger *Panorama II* sails from Bali around some of the most remote and seldom-visited islands of the Indonesian archipelago. Prices from £1,805pp, based on a departure date of 29 June 2019.

Azamara Club Cruises

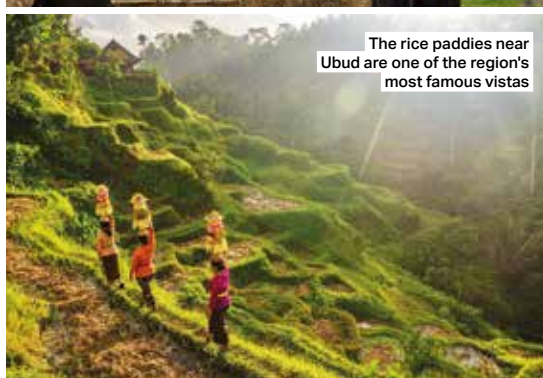
18-night Australia and Bali Voyage on *Azamara Journey* leaves Sydney on 24 March 2020, including calls at Darwin, Cairns and Bali before arriving in Singapore. Prices from £2,908pp.

Princess Cruises

15-night Indonesia round-trip cruise from Perth on *Sun Princess* includes calls at Lombok, Komodo Island, Ujung Pandang, Semarang, Probolinggo and Bali. Cruise-only prices from £1,298pp, departing 23 December 2019.



A statue guards the entrance of Pura Besakih Temple, and for visitors there's a view of Mount Agung beyond



The rice paddies near Ubud are one of the region's most famous vistas

SELLING TIPS

"Maximise every cruise booking by following up with customers before they depart, researching excursions and creating a personalised plan, such as trips for keen cyclists, photographers or nature lovers."

"For first-time cruisers, keep suggestions of excursions simple and traditional. A repeat cruiser may be ready for something a bit different, especially if they've been to the destination before."

"Any agents lucky enough to go on a fam trip to Bali should test a few excursions themselves so they know what they are selling. Cruisingexcursions.com offers complimentary excursions to agents."

"Near Ubud, the lovely village of Petulu offers a unique photo opportunity when hundreds of stunning white Peron birds return home and perch in the trees in the early evening hours. It's a truly impressive sight."

Chief operating officer
Cruisingexcursions.com
Simonne Fairbanks



A visit to the Batur Volcano could be popular with guests



Travellers will benefit from the total Scandi experience on a visit to the Swedish capital

Splendid Scandinavia

Sweden's capital city encompasses the Scandinavian way of life better than other cities in the region, says **Josh Stephenson**

Sweden is not the most obvious place for a budget city break. Food is expensive. Hotels are expensive. And if your customers happen to enjoy a few drinks, they'll need to factor this into their budget too.

But this is exactly the reason you should be recommending a cruise holiday to the capital city of Stockholm: it makes this famously unaffordable destination altogether easier on the pocket.

Plus, and more importantly, Stockholm is an incredible destination that showcases the region's

charms in a way no other Scandi city does.

Stockholm – and by association Sweden – is a healthy and happening nation and the perfect place to unwind for a few hours (or even days if your passengers have an overnight stay).

There's plenty of culture to be found in the city's numerous museums (including the world's oldest outdoor museum, Skansen), some truly delicious cuisine (especially those IKEA meatballs), and those with a keen eye will spot numerous instances of Scandi-chic style just begging to be brought home. >

Sightseeing highlights

ABBA MUSEUM

Take a chance on this interactive museum dedicated to the career of Swedish music titans ABBA. Visitors can prove they're the one true dancing queen and take to the stage alongside the group, posing for selfies with life-sized statues of the band, and thank Benny for the music as they sit behind his famous piano. It's a perfect celebration of the group for fans but, be warned, the day will set you back some money, money, money.

CITY HALL

The famous red brick tower of Stockholm City Hall has been the focus of many a tourist's camera lens. The tower - which is 108m tall - is capped by a golden spire featuring the national emblem of Stockholm, the three golden crowns. Visitors can even climb to the top of the tower during the summer months.

GAMLA STAN

No one can go to Stockholm without paying a visit to the famous Old Town, or as it's better known locally, Gamla Stan. Dating all the way back to the 12th century, it is a classic combination of cobbled streets, multi-coloured houses and charming cafés. It's a joy to walk around and guests will find it well worth stopping for a refreshing beer.

GRÖNA LUND FAIRGROUND

Kids will love a trip to Stockholm's famous amusement park, Gröna Lund, where there are more than 30 rides that will have them screaming all the way back to their cabins. There are rollercoasters for adrenaline junkies, squeal-inducing sheer drops for those without fear, plus rides that spin around for those who want to lose their lunch. It's worth noting that this popular attraction is only open during the main cruising season, from April to September.

STOCKHOLM PALACE

Welcome to the home of the King of Sweden. Construction on the Royal Palace started in the 18th century and it has been home to the Swedish royal family since then. It is one of the largest palaces in Europe (there are a staggering 600-plus rooms) and it is open to the public - there are five different museums to explore. A great day out and a fascinating look at Sweden's history.

SWEDISH PARLIAMENT

Those who make the journey to Gamla Stan are most likely to walk past the location of the Swedish government, the Riksdag. With its large arches and domed facade, there's plenty to catch the eye here.

VASA MUSEUM

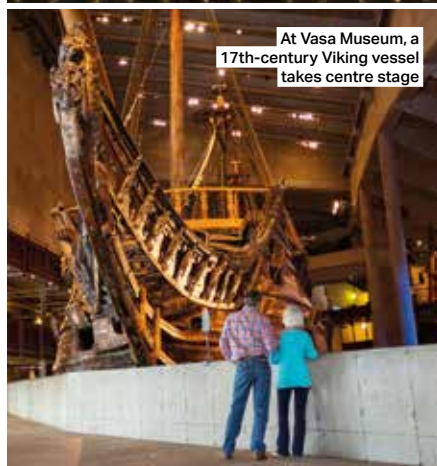
Ships don't come much better, or older, than this remarkably well-preserved 17th-century battleship. *Vasa* sunk on its maiden voyage in 1628 and was salvaged 333 years later in 1961 - since then a crack team has spent many painstaking hours restoring it to its former glory and the results are incredible.



There's plenty to impress visitors to the royal palace



Guests can enjoy the Gröna Lund Fairground



At Vasa Museum, a 17th-century Viking vessel takes centre stage



The Swedish Parliament is worth a visit en route to the Old Town

WHO SAILS IN?

EASTER HIDDEN BALTIC TREASURES

A 12-night cruise-only on board Cruise and Maritime's *Magellan* from £696pp (full-board) departing from Tilbury on 20 April 2019. The cruise ship is home to a fitness and wellness centre and makes stop-offs in Denmark, Germany, Sweden, Lithuania and Poland.

BALTIC CAPITALS & OVERNIGHT IN ST PETERSBURG

A seven-night fly-cruise on board Costa Cruises' *Costa Magica* from £879pp (full-board) departing from Stockholm on 8 June 2019.

The cruise includes overnight stays on board in Stockholm and St Petersburg, return UK flights, checked luggage, all non-UK transfers, plus stop-offs in Helsinki, St Petersburg and Tallinn.

MONARCHS & TSARS FROM STOCKHOLM

A seven-night fly-cruise on board Regent Seven Seas' *Explorer* from £3,799pp (all-inclusive) departing from Stockholm on 25 June 2019.

The cruise includes return UK flights, a luxury all-inclusive F&B package, free wifi, complimentary shore excursions and stop-offs in Helsinki, St Petersburg, Tallinn, Berlin and Copenhagen.

GRAND BALTIC CITIES & ST PETERSBURG

A 14-night cruise-only on board Cruise and Maritime's *Columbus* from £820pp (full-board) departing from Tilbury on 15 May 2019. The cruise ship features two swimming pools and a wellbeing centre and makes stop-offs in Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Berlin, Tallinn, St Petersburg, Helsinki Stockholm and Aarhus.

Itineraries courtesy of www.planetcruise.co.uk; 0808 278 8504



The city's Old Town – Gamla Stan – is famous for its brightly coloured buildings



SELLING TIPS

“If your customers see only one thing in Stockholm, make sure they visit Gamla Stan, the mediaeval centre, for cobbled streets, tiny alleys and some irresistible shops.

“With more time this is a very walkable city, so visitors should don comfortable shoes and set forth to explore.

“Don’t miss Djurgarden – depending on personal taste and the amount of time available, this tranquil island can be reached by ferry, tram, bike, or even on foot. Once arrived, there is plenty to see and do, including open air museums, amusement parks and more.

“There are some outstanding – if pricey – restaurants on offer in the city, so if your passengers are foodies then make sure they check out the options and book well in advance. If not, meatballs with mash and lingonberry jam is your ‘must try’ dish.

“Not for the faint-hearted, a rooftop hiking tour is one of Stockholm’s most unusual tourist offerings.”

Managing director,
Mundy Cruising, Edwina Lonsdale

Industry input



Chief operating officer at cruisingexcursions.com **Simonne Fairbanks** talks about the company’s travel agent-commissionable tours on offer in the Scandinavian city

“Stockholm enjoys a magnificent location and is served by two major cruise ports, with a third, Nynashamn, just outside the city. A very busy cruising season operates from April to October.

“Our most popular tour is the Essential Collection three-hour Stockholm highlights with Vasa Museum, priced from £49pp. This tour takes in the medieval Old Town, The Royal Palace, Parliament Building, National Museum, the modern city centre and more. A visit to the Vasa Museum is included, where the famous Viking warship can be seen, decorated with more than 700 sculptures, which were once brightly coloured and gilded.

“This excursion is also available as a private guided tour, with fewer numbers, a smaller vehicle and the chance to get the tour guide’s undivided attention. A number of small group tours of maximum 30 people are available in Stockholm, including one to Drottningholm Palace, which is located on an island in Sweden’s third-largest lake, now a UNESCO World Heritage site. Or there’s a private half-day tour priced from £357pp, with timings tailored to the ship’s arrival and departure.

“For those wanting to explore Stockholm at their own pace, we offer hop-on, hop-off bus excursions, priced from £45pp for a 24-hour ticket. The 17 stops around the city allow visitors to customise their own tour. As well as all the tourism attractions, there’s the option to include, for example, the ABBA Museum or the Ice Bar, or spend time in the popular shopping districts.” ⚓



Industry insider

The CTN team has been out and about, hobnobbing with the good and the great of the glamorous cruise world to bring you a flavour of all the recent launches, lunches, events and get-togethers



SOUTH BANK SUNSHINE

We sat down for an Insta-worthy lunch on London's South Bank with Celestyal Cruises' vice-president commercial, Europe, Andrew Magowan, and Kate Selley who manages PR for the cruise line. On the agenda were plans for growth in the UK market and the possibility of additional ships in the fleet.

EXPERT LEARNING

Archaeologist and Aurora Expeditions expedition team member Carol Knott and Aurora sales director UK and Europe Craig Upshall spoke to CTN about the current and future trends in expedition cruising. Knott and Upshall shared their fascinating insights and experience, making this a true voyage of discovery.



'OKAY, ZOE'

Team CTN rocked up at the splendid Gherkin building in central London to join MSC Cruises as it welcomed the newest member of its crew, Zoe. The cruise industry's virtual personal assistant – think Amazon's Alexa, but for cruise ships – has been designed to improve the overall guest experience. MSC Cruises' CEO, Gianni Onorato (second from right), told guests that Zoe – which debuts on *MSC Bellissima* – has been designed for "life on board a ship" and each device is unique to the ship it is on.



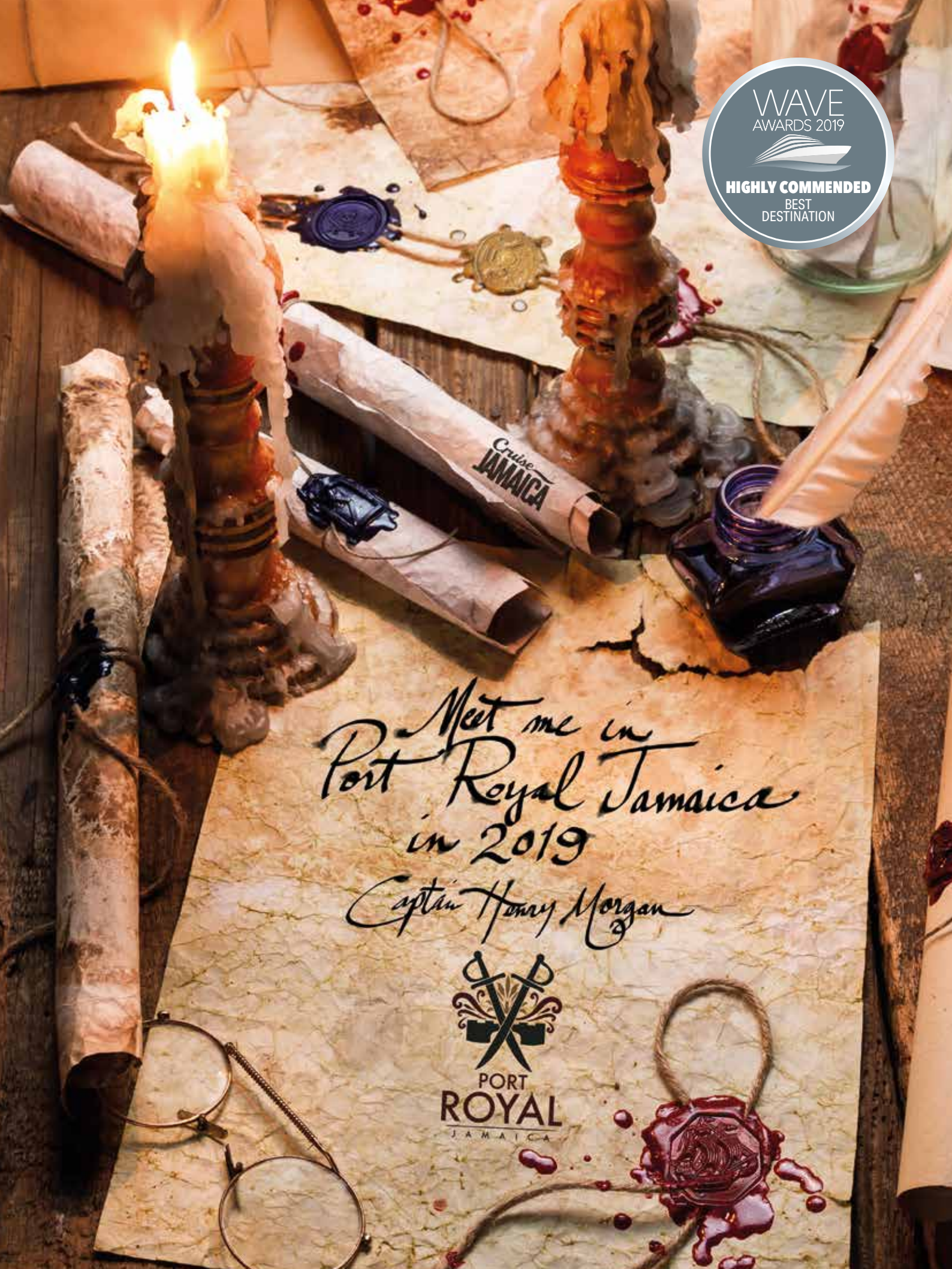
REDS WIN FIRST CHALLENGE

The Grange City Hotel at Tower Bridge played host to the first Cruise Challenge of 2019. Almost 50 cruise agents joined in the evening's shenanigans, where the red team got out of the gates fast to seize the early advantage. This led to a furious finish in the second half as the green and blue teams went on the hunt, but the pack could never quite close the gap to topple the mighty reds.



*Meet me in
Port Royal Jamaica
in 2019*

Captain Henry Morgan





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