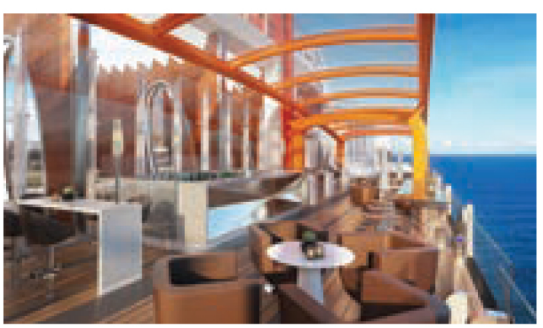
Revolutionary
on every level.
Celebrity
EDGE
Celebrity Cruises
Celebrity Cruises®
SAIL BEYOND BORDERS

Celebrity Edge[SM] changes everything.



Find out how inside.

HELPING AGENTS TO SELL MORE CRUISE

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ISSUE 77 I MAY 2018 I £5.50

cruise TRADE NEWS

Making tracks

On the rails with Rocky Mountaineer

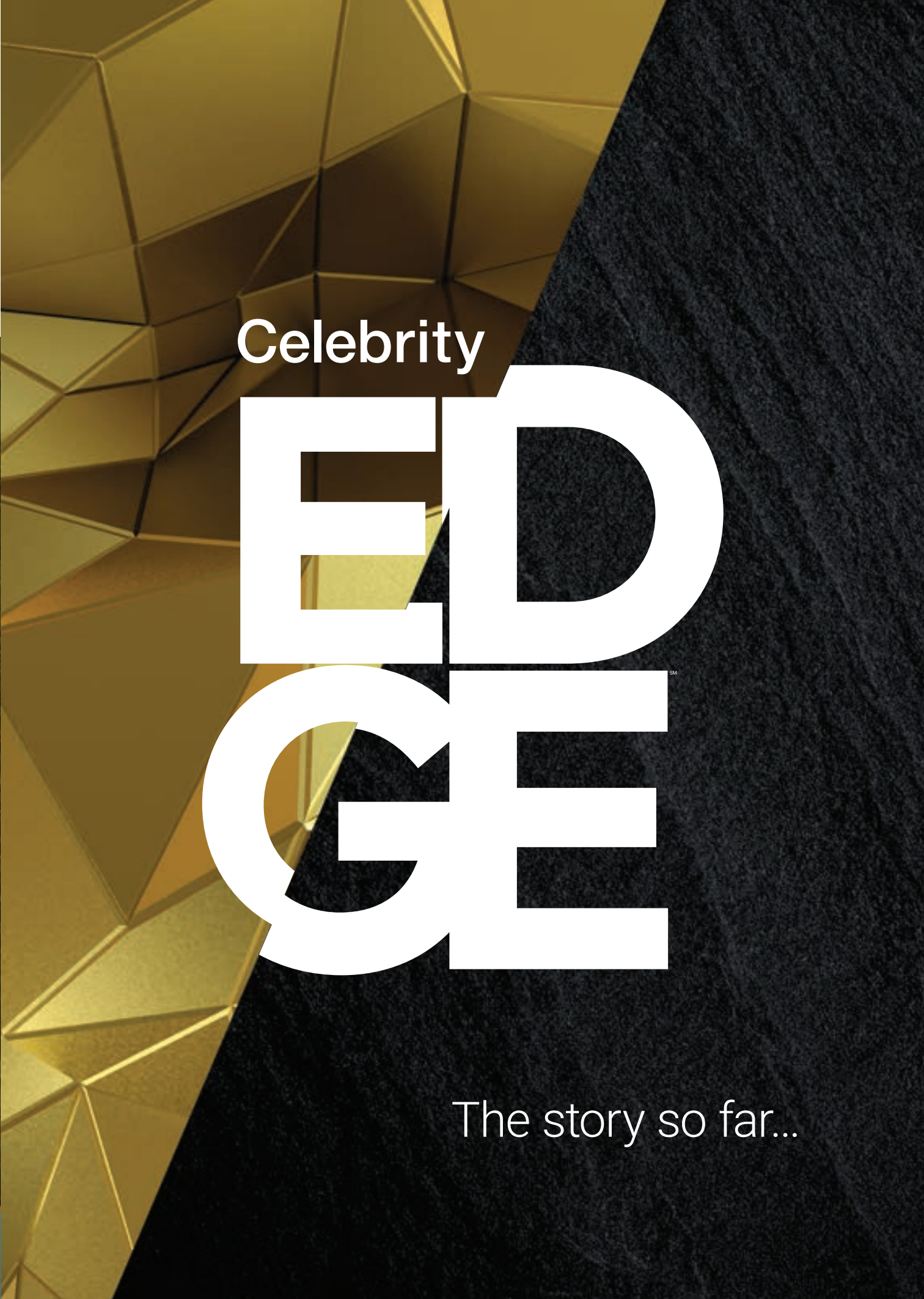
WIN
- KYLIE TICKETS
- A VIP RACE DAY

Are you a Cruise Star?

6 OF THE BEST EUROPEAN PORTS

INSIDE VIEW:
CROISI RENOIR
CARNIVAL HORIZON
SYMPHONY OF THE SEAS

- CHILD-FRIENDLY SAILINGS
- LUXURY EXPEDITION CRUISING
- YOUR BUSINESS: MARKETING
- HOW TO SELL FRENCH RIVERS


Celebrity
EDGE
The story so far...

Revolution revealed.

Celebrity Edge[SM] is set to change cruise holidays forever when she launches late this year. We've already heard some amazing things about what to expect from this revolutionary new ship, and there are more instalments still to come. Here's a reminder of what we know so far.

INCREDIBLE VENUES

The Retreat

Created by Kelly Hoppen MBE, this luxurious space is exclusive to Suite Class guests and features a sun deck with Pool Butlers, lounge with concierge, and Luminae at the Retreat.

The Resort Deck

Outdoor space incorporating the main pool area, the new Rooftop Garden, the Jogging Track, and the adults-only Solarium.

The Magic Carpet

The world's first cantilevered, floating platform, scaling the side of the ship and reaching heights of 13 storeys above sea level.

Eden

With a café, restaurant, Library of Plants and more, every sense is indulged at this glass-enclosed transformative space.

SPECTACULAR ACCOMMODATION
With a world-class design team new to the cruise industry, we've created accommodation that has never before been experienced at sea. Edge Staterooms feature Infinite Balconies[SM], where the touch of a button turns the entire living space into the balcony. We introduced two exciting new suite categories – the luxurious Iconic Suites, and the split-level Edge Villas. We even created connecting staterooms so your customers can combine rooms into a whole new space.

EXQUISITE CUISINE
A ship as stunning as Celebrity Edge deserves cuisine to match. We've drawn inspiration from the destinations we visit to compliment the visionary menus created by our Michelin-starrted chef Cornelius Gallagher. With a total of 29 distinctive restaurants, cafés, bars and lounges at their disposal, your customers might just discover a new favourite dish or cocktail each night.

IDYLLIC DESTINATIONS
Celebrity Edge starts island-hopping through the Caribbean in December, with two sun-drenched 7-night itineraries from Fort Lauderdale to the likes of Tortola in the British Virgin Islands, and Costa Maya in Mexico. Then from May 2019, she'll be sailing in the Mediterranean, with dynamic itineraries from 7–11 nights. These exciting sailings will visit bucket list-worthy cities plus new ports of call like Nauplion in Greece, and Santa Margherita in Italy.

And that's not all – look out for the next big reveal, coming soon!

Celebrity X Cruises®

SAIL BEYOND BORDERS

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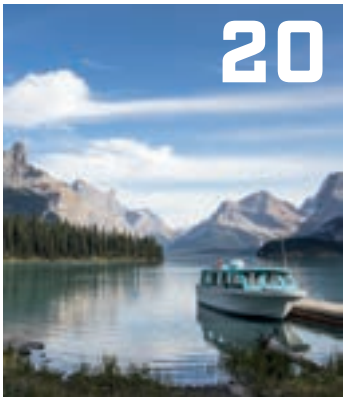

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2018-2020 Viking ocean cruises

on sale now from £1,940pp

Across the world, from the sun-kissed islands of the Caribbean and wonderful wildlife of Alaska to the ancient cities of the Med and spectacular beauty of Scandinavia, there's a Viking ocean cruise for you. From the comfort of a stunning, small ship that is home to just 930 guests, take in the view from your veranda stateroom. Relax in spacious, contemporary surroundings. Indulge in fabulous food in a choice of restaurants. Explore the culture and history of the places you visit on expertly led tours. And discover a unique and exciting new view of the world.

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8 days, 5 guided tours
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Into the Midnight Sun
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Bergen – London
From £4,490pp

Alaska & the Inside Passage
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Vancouver – Seward
From £4,390pp

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Bergen – Reykjavik
From £4,290pp

Empires of the Mediterranean
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Venice – Athens
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Sydney – Auckland
From £6,690pp

Bangkok, Bali & Beyond
13 days, 7 guided tours
Bangkok – Bali
From £3,945pp

South America & the Chilean Fjords
18 days, 8 guided tours
Buenos Aires – Santiago
From £7,190pp

Italian Sojourn
8 days, 6 guided tours
Rome – Venice
From £2,290pp

In Search of the Northern Lights
13 days, 6 guided tours
London – Bergen
From £3,790pp

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 2018-2020. Prices valid until 30 June 2018. Single supplements apply. Please note that duration of cruises shown is the cruise only. Total duration including flights of certain itineraries may be longer. For more information please visit vikingcruises.co.uk/terms-conditions or call us.

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cruisecritic UK EDITORS' PICKS 2017 Viking Ocean Cruises Best Luxury Cruise Line for Value

VIKING *Exploring the World in Comfort®*

Letter

Welcome to the new issue...

One of the most exciting things about this industry is the constant stream of **new ships** launching, all with increasingly impressive features that will bring a cruise alive when you're selling to prospective clients. I've just returned from a trip to the **Mediterranean** to check out Carnival's new ship, **Horizon** – there are so many great things on board, it should be a simple sell! Read more on page 61. But it's not just the big ships stealing the show; smaller vessels are also in demand, and **luxury expedition cruising**, or 'luxploring', is on the up. Our insightful feature on page 29 will hopefully inspire you to tackle this growing sector with confidence. I've also been on the **Seine river** celebrating the launch of new CroisiEurope ship **MS Renoir** at which the Croisi family were in attendance. You can check out the pictures on page 26. **Alaska** is also increasing in popularity; we highlight some of the best itineraries on page 44. And, as if that's not enough, we're also launching our all-new **Cruise Stars Awards** on page 50. Enter now – and you could be scooping one of our trophies later in the year.

Rebecca Barnes
Editor
@RebeccaCTN

REFURBS

Silver Spirit undergoes lengthening project

In a significant feat of naval engineering, Silversea's Silver Spirit was recently cut in two at Fincantieri's Palermo shipyard. A prebuilt 15-metre (49-foot) segment was then inserted and the ship reconnected. The lengthening process is now complete but work on the ship's interior will be ongoing – the project is set to be completed on 5 May.

With the aim of amplifying guests' on-board experience, the lengthening project will create more space in public areas and enhance Silver Spirit's facilities.

Speaking exclusively to Cruise Trade News, Peter Shanks, Silversea's MD, said, "The thought process for the lengthening of Silver Spirit was straightforward. At a time when we are having a real resurgence in Silversea, as well as increasing our ship orders, we've been looking at doing refurbishment across the fleet. After considering the success of Silver Muse we decided there was an opportunity to stretch Silver Spirit. But it's not just about the stretching. Half the investment we have put into this project will go on refurbishing the ship – the suites, the public spaces – and adding new restaurants. This reflects what we are doing with the fleet."

Cutting edge: Silver Spirit is cut in two

PARAGON PIXELS

NEW SHIPS

Amadeus River Cruises' new technology

Founder Dr Wolfgang Luftner and his daughter Corina, who is also the ship's Godmother

Amadeus Queen, the 14th ship to join the Amadeus fleet, was recently christened in Amsterdam. The new flagship for Amadeus River Cruises boasts an innovative design feature to enable the ship to continue sailing when other vessels are affected by high water levels.

The ship builders revealed that the height of the 162-passenger vessel had been reduced by 15cm (5.9in), to allow it to sail under bridges and overcome challenges caused by extreme water levels resulting from excessive rainfall or melting spring snow.

Shipyard president Patrick Janseens reported that it was the first time they had been asked to reduce the height of a European river vessel; such vessels are usually all identical in length, width and height. "It is a brand-new design and was not without its challenges," he said. "There is no other ship like it and it will mean that in high water levels this ship will be the last one still sailing and able to pass under bridges and complete the voyage when other ships have to stop."

NEW SHIPS

Riviera Travel christens new ship

Riviera Travel recently held a christening ceremony in Vienna for the latest addition to its fleet, the 167-passenger all-suite MS Robert Burns, which will sail on the Rhine, Main and Danube.Joseph Grimley, Riviera Travel's head of agency sales, said it was part of an expansion that provided "plenty for agents to get excited about".

Following the launch of four ships in 2017, MS Robert Burns is the first of two new vessels to be launched in 2018 by the UK's largest river cruise operator. It will be followed by the Douro Splendour in Portugal, and next year will see the debut of the William Wordsworth and the boutique-style MS George Eliot.

MS Robert Burns was christened in Vienna

MS Robert Burns has three passenger decks with staterooms ranging from 172sq.ft to 269sq.ft, with some cabins featuring floor-to-ceiling sliding panoramic windows.

This year Riviera is set to carry 40,000 passengers. New for 2018 are two sailings for solo travellers – a Danube cruise and a Burgundy itinerary, both leaving in November.

TECHNOLOGY

Marella Explorer's state-of-the-art features

Marella Cruises' latest addition to the fleet, and its biggest ship yet, Marella Explorer, which will set sail from Palma in May, will offer guests brand-new entertainment and a state-of-the-art touchscreen DJ deck.

Twelve new shows, ranging from an adult fairytale featuring music from the likes of Metallica and David Bowie to a Latin dance show and after-party are just a taste of what's on offer. There's even a family-friendly singalong show where the audience votes for the final song through the ships' on-board app.

The cruise line has also been working with leading entertainment provider ted to make two of its shows 4D. Specially selected scents will be released into the show lounge before and during the show, so that guests are able to truly experience the production.

The innovative Explorer

The Emulator is the world's first multi-touch DJ system that allows the crowd to see what the DJ is doing on a huge touchscreen. The device will be located in feature bar Indigo, where it will be used to play music and project videos.

APPOINTMENTS

Rocky Mountaineer has announced the recruitment of **Steven Harris** as business development manager, EMEA and India. Harris joins from MSC Cruises where he worked in a variety of roles, most recently as national account manager. In this role, Harris significantly transformed trade relationships.

Global Ports Holding has announced the appointment of **Martin Brown** as investor relations director. Based in the UK, he will report to CEO Emre Sayın. Martin brings extensive experience to GPH, having worked in UK capital markets for almost 20 years.

Celebrity Cruises has appointed **Valerie Murphy** as strategic account manager for Ireland. Murphy will lead sales and business development activity throughout the Republic of Ireland, and be part of an extensive sales and support team aiding agents across Ireland and the UK.

Fred.\Holidays has announced the appointment of **Dave Chidley** as agency sales manager. Working with the trade, Chidley, who previously worked for Uniworld, will further enhance relationships with Victory Cruise Lines and Pullmantur Cruises.

NEW ITINERARIES

Viking's new ocean and river cruises

VIking has something tosuit every cruise client

Viking has announced its 2019 Ocean & River Voyages, which will provide guests with the opportunity to explore Europe's rivers on a Viking Longship, before setting sail to Scandinavia on one of Viking's ocean ships. Debuting in May 2019, the Grand European & Viking Fjords itinerary will sail Budapest to Bergen, combining Viking's 15-day Grand European Tour cruise on the Rhine and Danube Rivers between Budapest and Amsterdam with the eight-day Viking Shores & Fjords ocean itinerary, which sails the North Sea, between Amsterdam and Bergen.

"Our guests are experienced travellers who appreciate immersive cultural experiences, while also exploring the world in comfort," said Torstein Hagen, chairman of Viking. "Only Viking can provide a destination-focused voyage that marries the river and sea into a single, unified journey."

Starting in June 2018, Viking's first two combination cruises will allow guests to explore even more throughout Europe, with rich cultural experiences in each port of call.

RIVER CRUISES

Celebrity chef to host APT river cruise in 2019

River cruise and tour operator APT has revealed that its brand ambassador, celebrity chef and TV personality Luke Nguyen, will host a specially designed gourmet-themed river cruise holiday in France in 2019.

The Vietnamese-Australian chef has strong links to the country, having visited frequently to spend time with family in Paris, and to film his television series, Luke Nguyen's France.

APT's new 11-day Grand Bordeaux with Luke Nguyen journey comprises three nights in Paris, followed by a seven-night luxury APT river cruise in the Bordeaux region aboard the AmaDolce, departing Paris in August 2019.

The new itinerary will be fully inclusive and features several Luke Nguyen Signature Experiences delivered in person by Nguyen, including a cooking class and dining experience in Paris, and a personally prepared dinner in the Saint Emilion wine region.

Luke Nguyen will host a food-themed cruise

REFURBS

New ship for One Ocean Expeditions

The addition of RCGS Resolute to the fleet of One Ocean Expeditions' (OOE) ships, brings with it the chance to visit new destinations.

The refurbished, ice-strengthened ship will be sailing into Sydney, Nova Scotia, on Canada's east coast, in October 2018, to be re-christened the RCGS Resolute.

RCGS Resolute, which carries a maximum of 146 passengers, offers the capacity to host and operate an increased number of excursion and activity programmes, while continuing to ensure the same small-group philosophy and intimacy found on all OOE vessels.

RCGS Resolute's inaugural voyage will depart from Ushuaia, Argentina, on 16 November 2018, on the Antarctica – Off the Beaten Track voyage.

Icy adventures on an OOE cruise

SALES NEWS

Sales booming at Travel 2

Destinations such as Bangkok are performing well

Cruise Plus by Travel 2 has reported overall sales up by 30 per cent year on year, a strengthened sales team up from four to 20 and growing the number of suppliers it works with from nine to over 30.

South America, South East Asia and European cruise departures continue to lead the charge, with sales up by 145 per cent, 35 per cent and 32 per cent respectively. Cruise Plus by Travel 2 has also launched its first dedicated river cruise brochure. The sales tool features cruises to Europe, Canada, Africa, South America, USA and Asia within 16 itineraries.

SALES NEWS

CMV incentive achieves record sales

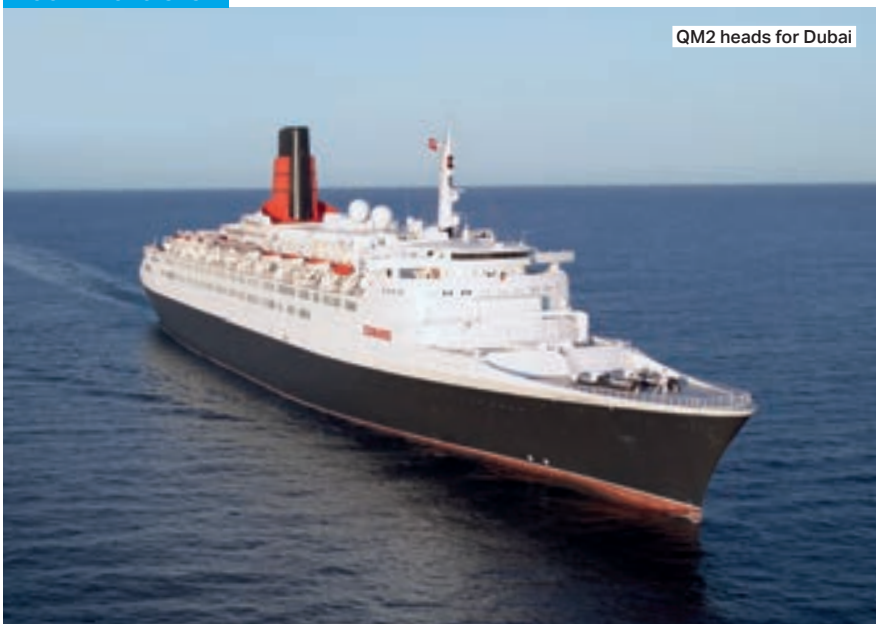
Cruise and Maritime Voyages' recent travel agent incentive helped achieve record sales from the trade for the start of 2018. More than 1500 agents entered for a chance of winning one of 10 prizes, including a fam trip to the Norwegian Fjords, snapped up by Kelly Swinhoe from ROL Cruise, while Tracey Murray from Miles Morgan Travel won a Fitbit Charge, presented by CMV development manager for South West England, Alison Leeke.

Lisa Jacobs, CMV's head of trade sales, said: "Trade support throughout the year continues to be excellent. CMV were delighted with the response to this draw, which was related to popular New Year resolutions relating to health, reducing stress, more sleep and food."

Tracey Murray with CMV's Alison Leeke

Your news

OCEAN CRUISES



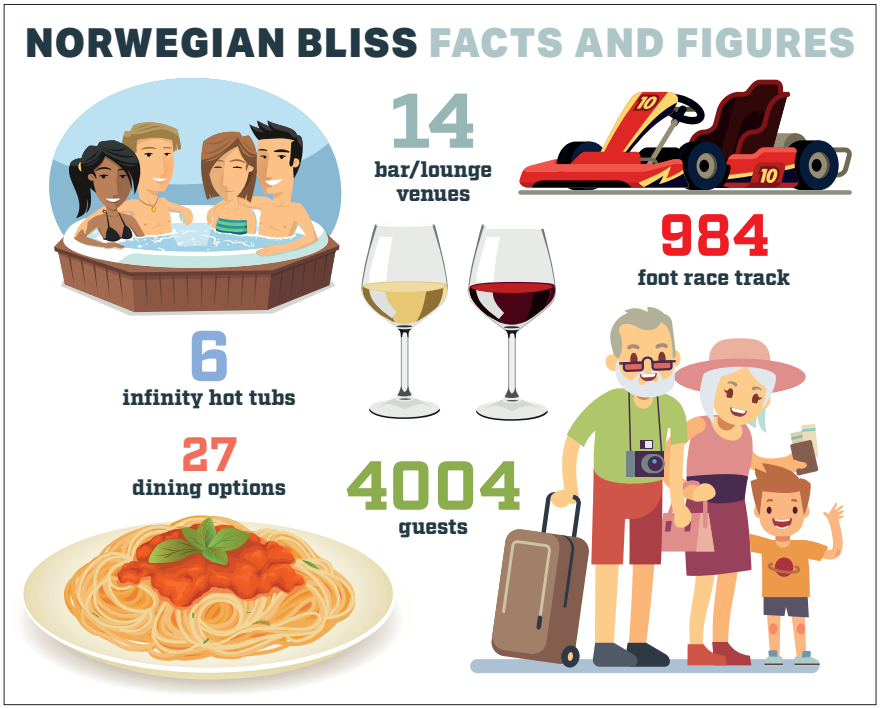
QM2 heads for Dubai

QM2 guests first to visit QE2 Hotel

Dubai welcomed the most famous ocean liner in the world when the arrival of QM2 (on her world voyage) coincided with the opening of the Queen Elizabeth 2 Hotel in April 2018.

Future guests will also have the chance to visit the floating hotel when QM2 returns to Dubai in January and March 2019, as part of the ship's next world voyage.

QE2 Hotel is owned by PCFC Hotels – part of the Dubai government's Ports, Customs and Free Zones Corporation – and will reside permanently at Mina Rashid, Dubai. Simon Palethorpe, senior vice president, Cunard said: "We feel very privileged that our flagship QM2 is able to join these celebrations and that our guests will have an opportunity to visit QE2. We hope that her new permanent home will be enjoyed by many visitors in the years to come and are delighted that her spirit lives on for future generations."



IN BRIEF

Up close and personal

European Waterways has added new, exclusive and often 'one-of-a-kind' experiences to its itineraries. From lunch with a Countess to visiting an oyster farm, hotel barge guests will be able to enjoy a number of different 'meet and greet' opportunities.

For nature lovers and foodies a unique experience is offered on the 28 October departure of the eight-passenger Anjodi hotel barge. The vessel previously starred in a popular culinary television series hosted by British chef Rick Stein.

Divine dining on Edge

Celebrity Cruises will have 29 world-class eateries, including four main dining restaurants, on new ship Celebrity Edge. There will be a cantilevered restaurant 16 decks above the ocean as well as a dining venue with immersive fusion technology and animation. Expect an exclusive Suite Class restaurant, Luminae at The Retreat, and the spa-inspired Blu AquaClass restaurant. Seven new specialty restaurants, five complimentary dining venues and 11 bars and lounges add to the options.

CLIA hosts luxury cruise event

CLIA is to host a two-day luxury cruise showcase in Malaga on 15 and 16 October 2018.

Around 80 travel agent places will be available for the event, which will include ship visits, conference sessions and trade marketplace networking sessions.

Andy Harmer, CLIA UK director, said: "We are thrilled to be able to offer travel agents the chance to come to Malaga to learn more about the diversity and ever-changing luxury sector of the cruise market."

CroisiEurope waives single supplement

Europe's largest river cruise operator, CroisiEurope, has announced that it is waiving the single supplement on all 2018 departures when booked by 30 June 2018. This offer is valid for new bookings on 2018 cruises, including the French canals, European rivers and Adriatic coast, as well as on the Volga, the Mekong and cruises in Africa. The offer is not valid on CroisiEurope's New Year cruises.

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THIS MAY, WE'RE LAUNCHING A LEAGUE OF OUR OWN.

THE LOYALTY ROCKS CLUB CUP! OUR TOP 32 BOOKERS, WILL BE ASSIGNED ONE OF THE 32 SEEDED TEAMS IN THIS YEAR'S WORLD CUP. FOR EXAMPLE, TOP BOOKER WILL GET BRAZIL. IF YOUR TEAM CRUISES UP THE LEAGUE TABLES, YOU'LL BE IN WITH A CHANCE TO WIN A CRUISE FOR TWO! ANY DESTINATION, AND DURATION!*

WHETHER YOU'RE ROOKIE OF THE YEAR, OR CAPTAIN OF YOUR TEAM, YOU'RE IN WITH A SHOT.

Throughout the month of May we're offering £10 per booking.
Which can be redeemed on our Loyalty Rocks Club app.

loyaltyrocksclub.com

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App Store | Google play

TRAVEL AGENTS ROCK! | Carnival®

Terms & Conditions: Full Loyalty Rocks Terms and Conditions apply, these can be found on our website (www.loyaltyrocksclub.com). Carnival Cruise Line reserves the right to increase and decrease points awarded through the incentive scheme without notice at any time. The claim must be submitted by the end of each month in order for correct points to be allocated. Bookings submitted through Loyalty Rocks Club from 1st May until 31st May 2018 will earn 10 points per booking, which equals £10 per booking through the Loyalty Rocks Club scheme. The winner of our Loyalty Rocks will win a cruise for 2, (Cruise Only Offer) full terms and conditions on (www.loyaltyrocksclub.com).

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- Inclusive room service
- Enrichment lecturers
- Onboard gratuities

CANADA & NEW ENGLAND

Montreal to New York

26 Oct 2018 | 10 nights | *Silver Spirit*

Montreal > Quebec City > Cruise Saguenay River > Saguenay, Quebec > Baie-Comeau, Quebec > Day at sea > Sydney, Nova Scotia > Halifax, Nova Scotia > Bar Harbor, Maine > Boston, Massachusetts > Newport, Rhode Island > **New York**

Vista Suite from £3,100pp

Enjoy return Business Class flights for £1,598 or free Economy Class return flights plus free hotel in New York City and transfers. **Book by 31 May 2018.**

CARIBBEAN

Fort Lauderdale to Bridgetown

31 Oct 2018 | 10 nights | *Silver Whisper*

Fort Lauderdale > Day at sea > Grand Turk > Samana > San Juan > Road Town, Tortola > Gustavia, St Barthelemy > Roseau > Castries > St George's > **Bridgetown**

Vista Suite from £3,400pp

Enjoy Business Class flights for £999 each way or free Economy Class return flights plus free transfers. **Book by 31 May 2018.**

CARIBBEAN

Bridgetown to Fort Lauderdale

16 Nov 2018 | 12 nights | *Silver Spirit*

Bridgetown > St George's > Castries > Roseau > Basseterre, St. Kitts ☽ > Gustavia, St Barthelemy > Road Town, Tortola > San Juan > Samana > 2 days at sea > Key West, Florida > **Fort Lauderdale**

Vista Suite from £3,690pp 🕒

Enjoy Business Class flights for £999 each way or free Economy Class return flights plus free transfers. **Book by 31 May 2018.**

ASIA

Singapore Roundtrip

01 Dec 2018 | 12 nights | *Silver Muse*

Singapore > Port Klang (Kuala Lumpur) > Penang, Georgetown > Phuket > Day at sea > Yangon ☽ ☽ > 2 days at sea > Langkawi > Day at sea > **Singapore**

Vista Suite from £4,860pp 🕒

Enjoy return Business Class flights for £2,999 or free Economy Class return flights plus included pre & post hotel, transfers and free shore excursions. **Book by 31 May 2018.**

INDONESIA AND AUSTRALIA

Benoa, Bali to Sydney

21 Dec 2018 | 16 nights | *Silver Muse*

Bali (Benoa) ☽ > Komodo > 2 days at sea > Darwin > 3 days at sea > Cairns ☽ > Townsville > Whitsunday Islands > Day at sea > Brisbane > Day at sea > **Sydney**

Vista Suite from £6,300pp 🕒

🕒 with early booking bonus. Book by 30 June 2018.

☽ overnight in port

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A first time for everything...

Want to know how to hook in newbies? See what the industry had to say at the recent ABTA Attracting First Time Cruisers conference

DO WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO GROW?

UK&I cruisers 2017

1,959,000 → 2,400,000

Share of holiday market

5.5%

4.5%

"A taster cruise is a great way to get people to cruise for the first time."
Neil Duncan, general manager, trading and planning, Marella Cruises

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT NEW TO CRUISE

- They spend more
- Higher satisfaction scores
- They shout on social
- They help change perceptions
- They become advocates

"Brits take holidays – and the key thing is we get people on board. The best agents make an emotional connection with their customers. The role of the agent is to know the product and sell the memory."
Stuart Leven, chair of CLIA and VP, Europe, Middle East and Africa, and MD of Royal Caribbean International

"Just got off my first river cruise last week. It was amazing – other than the fact that we were the youngest by 30 years at least. We loved every minute of the trip – except the night-time activities. Would definitely be interested in a river cruise for younger generation and I definitely think the market would be there."
Uniworld Boutique River Cruises customer

NEED TO KNOW

- New generations want value, destination experiences, entertainment – and to be social
- Travel agents continue to be matchmakers between travellers and cruise lines
- River cruising is in full flow – new developments in ships, design and experiences
- Expedition is the new river
- It's all about the experience – what can you do on board?
- New technology: LNG, recycling, investment in operations. Most cruise lines have a conscience
- Focus on destination, destination, destination – and what can be done when there

Source: CLIA

Reaching the new customer

- Think of ways to 'tweak' the product to tailor it to specific customer groups
- Small changes or offering options can make a big difference in appeal
- Focus on targeted marketing through key influencers and hype up the experience through social media
- Enable try-before-you-buy experiences through new technologies
- Be innovative in how you collect data on first time customers before they come on board
- A personalised experience is key to a 'surprise and delight' effect and peer marketing
- Think how to offer more flexibility in payment to attract cash-strapped consumer groups both now and in the future

Source: Deloitte

"River is gaining traction. Last year, 50 per cent of our new to cruisers were river cruisers. TV has had an impact on this as we've not been marketing to them."
Phil Nuttall, MD, The Travel Village Group

"TV is a very good mechanism to educate people about what we have on board. It puts cruise in front of people who may not even be thinking about it."
Alex White, VP of sales and distribution, P&O Cruises

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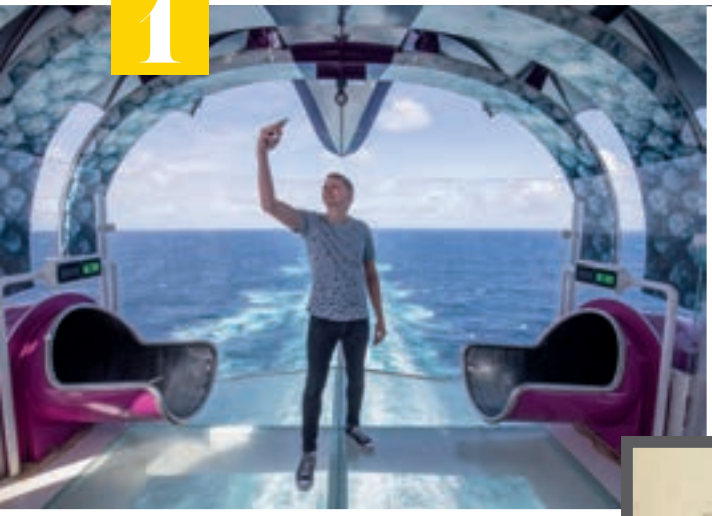
ABTA ABTA No.V3031

We are a member of ABTA and our flight-inclusive holidays are fully protected by the CAA's ATOL scheme. All meals are included on board; hotel nights before/after may not include meals. Please visit www.avaloncruises.co.uk. Open-air balcony suites from £2,545pp available on Tulip Time cruise departing 25/03/19 from London Luton. Early booking price pledge applies to all new flight-inclusive bookings made before 30/06/18 for departure between 01/01/19 and 31/12/19. Avalon Waterways will refund the difference between the booked price and the lower price if the customer's booked departure subsequently reduces at any point prior to travel, minus the value of any early booking promotions. The lower price must be a published fare freely available to book direct with Avalon Waterways. A credit will be issued against the customer's remaining balance or credited to the original payment method if the balance has already been paid. Customers with a past or future Avalon booking will receive £100pp discount when making a new booking between 25/04/18 and 31/05/18 for departure between 01/01/19 and 31/12/19. Private home pick-up service is included within 100 miles of their departure point. New Panorama/Royal Suite bookings made between 25/04/18 and 30/06/18 for departure between 01/01/19 and 31/12/19 are eligible to receive a £100 John Lewis Gift Card per passenger. John Lewis Gift Cards will be dispatched by recorded delivery to the lead passenger within 12 weeks after deposit payment has been received. Avalon Waterways cannot be held responsible for any delay or loss of John Lewis Gift cards after dispatch. All offers are subject to availability, have no equivalent monetary value and no cash alternative, and may be withdrawn at any time. Correct at time of print (25 April 2018).

Movers & Shakers

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

1



1. SLIDE AWAY

Do you dare to ride The Ultimate Abyss on Royal Caribbean's new ship, Symphony of the Seas? The faces of those who have just survived the white-knuckle descents of the tallest slide at sea are not something you'll want to miss on camera… but can you capture the exhilaration just at the right moment for the perfect Insta shot? Scary slides aside, if you think your clients might like to learn more about the ship, turn to page 34 for some of the highlights.

2

2. SCENT OF A SHIP

One of the main objectives of an MSC Cruise is, we are told, to leave guests feeling invigorated across all their senses. Hence, perhaps, the 2009 launch of the fragrance MED by MSC. Developed by Brand Sense, the global leader in sensory marketing, and Firmenich, which is famous for perfume creation, the fragrance combines warm notes of fig, almond and vetiver to create a welcoming ambience. The scent is delicately diffused through the ships' air conditioning ducts in walkways and rooms, as well as table linens, bedding, towels and dressing gowns. MED by MSC costs €24.90 on board; it's free if the MSC Aurea experience package is booked.

3

3. COOK'S COLLECTION

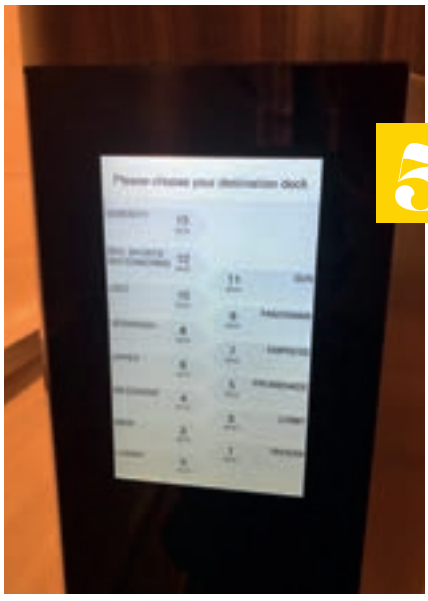
Our favourite French cruise line, Ponant, is sponsoring a major exhibition at the British Library. James Cook: The Voyages marks 250 years since James Cook's ship Endeavour first set sail from Plymouth. The exhibition will feature artworks, original maps and handwritten journals, including iconic depictions of people and landscapes by expedition artists and local dignitaries. The exhibition runs until 28 August 2018. For more information, and to book, visit bl.uk/events/james-cook-the-voyages; email boxoffice@bl.uk or call 01937 546546.

4

4. ICE ICE BABY

Nothings spells summer more than ice cream, so we were excited to hear about the new artisanal gelati being served up on Seabourn Ovation. The gelati will first appear on Ovation when the ship launches in May, before being served across the entire fleet. Guests will be able to choose from a range of flavours, including Amarena Cherry, Amaretto, Dulce De Leche, Stracciatella, Sicilian Pistachio, Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Rhubarb, Blackcurrant and Black Cherry. For authenticity, a special gelato will be created whenever the ship calls into a port where the chefs can procure local ingredients, such as lemons grown along the Amalfi coast. A variety of 'no-sugar added' gelato will also be offered. Sign us up now…

5



5. LIFT ME UP

We think the 'smart lifts' on Carnival Horizon are genius. It can get confusing waiting for the next lift on the bigger ships – not to mention slightly tedious if you're going to the top deck and other people are getting out before you. Designed by Schindler, the mobility provider on board Horizon, these lifts ensure fewer stops, faster travel times and shorter waiting times. We can speak from personal experience that they really do what they say on the tin!

WORDS: REBECCA BARNES

PORTRAIT OF CAPTAIN JAMES COOK (1728-79) (C) BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD

Is this Saga's best ever trade incentive?

You know we include so much more in the price of our holidays, so here's your chance to enjoy an all-inclusive treat too. Book any Saga holiday, cruise or river cruise during April and May and you could win a VIP Race Day at either Aintree or Newmarket. This fabulous prize includes a private box with lunch, a free bar and transport, plus A-list entertainment to round off your day.

There's one chance to win with every booking – two for long haul holidays – and with 20 places available the odds are pretty good too.

Win a VIP Race Day at Aintree
and see Craig David live
or
at Newmarket
and see Paloma Faith live

You bet!

Call **FREE** on **0800 074 8021** or visit **saga.co.uk/agents**
Become a Saga expert, visit **sagaexperts.com**
Find us on social media **Saga Trade Team**

SAGA
keep doing

ABTA W8164 / W8179

For every booking you make between April 1 and May 31, 2018 you'll be entered into a prize draw to win VIP tickets to race days and the chance to see Craig David on Jun 15 at Aintree or Paloma Faith on Jun 22, 2018 at Newmarket. Long-haul holidays gain two entries. To enter email the booking reference number to incentives@saga.co.uk. For terms and conditions visit saga-trade/incentives. Saga holidays are for anyone aged 50+. A travel companion may be 40+. NHA-SC9551.

16 PAGES OF INTERVIEWS, SALES INCENTIVES AND CAREER INSPIRATION

Your Business

MS Robert Burns is christened in Vienna

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What's in it for you?

Win Kylie tickets with Avalon Waterways

INCENTIVE

Avalon Waterways is giving agents the chance to see Kylie Minogue live as part of its 2019 booking incentive.

The Avalon Waterways 2019 programme includes an all-suite European fleet, an Active Discovery offering, the introduction of the Avalon Choice excursion programme, and a host of new itineraries to choose from, including the cruise line's first voyage through the heart of India and an 11-day German Grandeur voyage.

For the chance to win a pair of tickets for the concert on 27 September 2018, agents need to book a 2019 Avalon Waterways cruise before 30 May 2018 and send their name, agency details and booking reference to agencysales@avaloncruises.co.uk. For each booking made, agents will be entered into the prize draw.

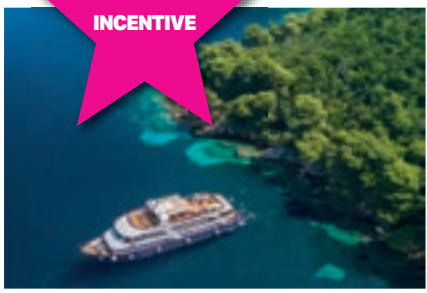
Tea time with Star Clippers

Star Clippers is inviting homeworkers to enhance their knowledge of their clipper sailings. Over one hundred places are available for Star Clippers' Clipper Catch Up, Cuppa and Cake afternoon tea at Patisserie Valerie, with Star Clippers' expert sales team in locations across the UK throughout May and early June. Star Clippers' three tall ships sail the Caribbean, Mediterranean and South East Asia, offering guests a unique opportunity to cruise on ships that recreate the historic style of the 19th-century trading clippers.

To apply for one of just 10 places at each location, homeworkers should email agency.sales@starclippers.co.uk to reserve a space. The locations are:

10 May - Chester and Norwich
15 May - Glasgow and Reading
16 May - Edinburgh and Sutton Coldfield
22 May - Preston
23 May - Tunbridge Wells
24 May - Bristol
6 June - Exeter
11 June - Belfast

INCENTIVE



A taste for adventure

Intrepid Travel is offering agents the chance to win a trip on an adventure cruise with every 10 cruise bookings made. Trips include departures around Iceland's wild west coast and cruising from Lisbon to Malaga, among others. A full list of adventure cruises can be viewed at intrepidtravel.com/uk/adventure-cruising. Agents should apply by emailing ukbdm@intrepidtravel.com, and can find out more by logging into intrepidlovesagents.com.

INCENTIVE

Saga's racy incentive

Book any Saga cruise or river cruise in May and you could win a VIP Race Day at either Aintree or Newmarket. The prize includes a private box with lunch, a free bar and transport. There's also A-list entertainment from Craig David (Aintree) and Paloma Faith (Newmarket) to round off your day. There's one chance to win with every booking – and with 20 places available, the odds are pretty good! **To enter, email the booking reference number to incentives@saga.co.uk.**

Catch Paloma Faith at Newmarket, below, and Craig David at Aintree

INCENTIVE

Taking the Scenic route

The more Scenic river cruises you book, the higher the reward, with the chance of earning double points (200) for every Scenic Eclipse booking in May and June. Scenic has also introduced touring points, a scheme that awards you 150 points for every touring booking made. This will run alongside the incentives for Scenic river cruises (100 points). Points can be redeemed against prizes including a new TV or laptop, a Mulberry handbag and a river cruise.

1. Record your booking references to keep up to date with your total. Want to keep track on a Collector's Card? Email rewards@scenic.co.uk to claim one
2. At the end of each quarter, pick your gift at riverrewards.cruises
3. Email your references to rewards@scenic.co.uk to verify your bookings and fill in the online claims form with your reward of choice.

Collect as many points as you can in three months, then exchange them in the first fortnight of the next quarter. Agents can find out more at riverrewards.cruises.

Canadian classic

Patrick Ryan, managing director, sales EMEA & India, at Rocky Mountaineer, discusses new itineraries, the UK market and strong trade relationships

Over 80 per cent of Rocky Mountaineer journeys are sold through our trade partners, meaning that we rely heavily on our travel trade partners across the globe. This is especially true in the UK, where the majority of our trips are booked through the trade, and the majority of our marketing spend is put towards co-op advertising opportunities, working directly with partners.

In the UK, a high proportion of our sales incorporate an Alaska cruise, so it's both a huge opportunity for Rocky Mountaineer and an area that requires training. We hired a dedicated agent trainer for our UK market, Sarah Revell, who visits agencies to deliver presentations on what is new with our product, typical guest profiles, cruise match tool (matching cruises to our departure date) and other topics geared at making agents feel comfortable packaging cruise and rail together. The Rocky Mountaineer rail demographic is matched perfectly with ocean and river cruising, so pairing a Western Canadian rail journey and Alaska cruise gives guests a chance to experience everything the West Coast of North America has to offer.

"Canada is, as a brand, becoming more of a 'must-do' destination and Rocky Mountaineer rises to the top of most iconic Canadian experiences"

In 2017, UK overnight visitor numbers saw the second-highest growth result since 2008. Canada is, as a brand, becoming more of a 'must-do' destination, and Rocky Mountaineer rises to the top of most iconic Canadian experiences. We're building on this 'Canadian momentum' – Canada is seen as a safe destination following recent European terrorist attacks – and focusing on the cruising market as an area of growth for our 2019 season. Even more so with the entry of quintessential British cruising brand Cunard into Alaska for the first time in its 180-year history.

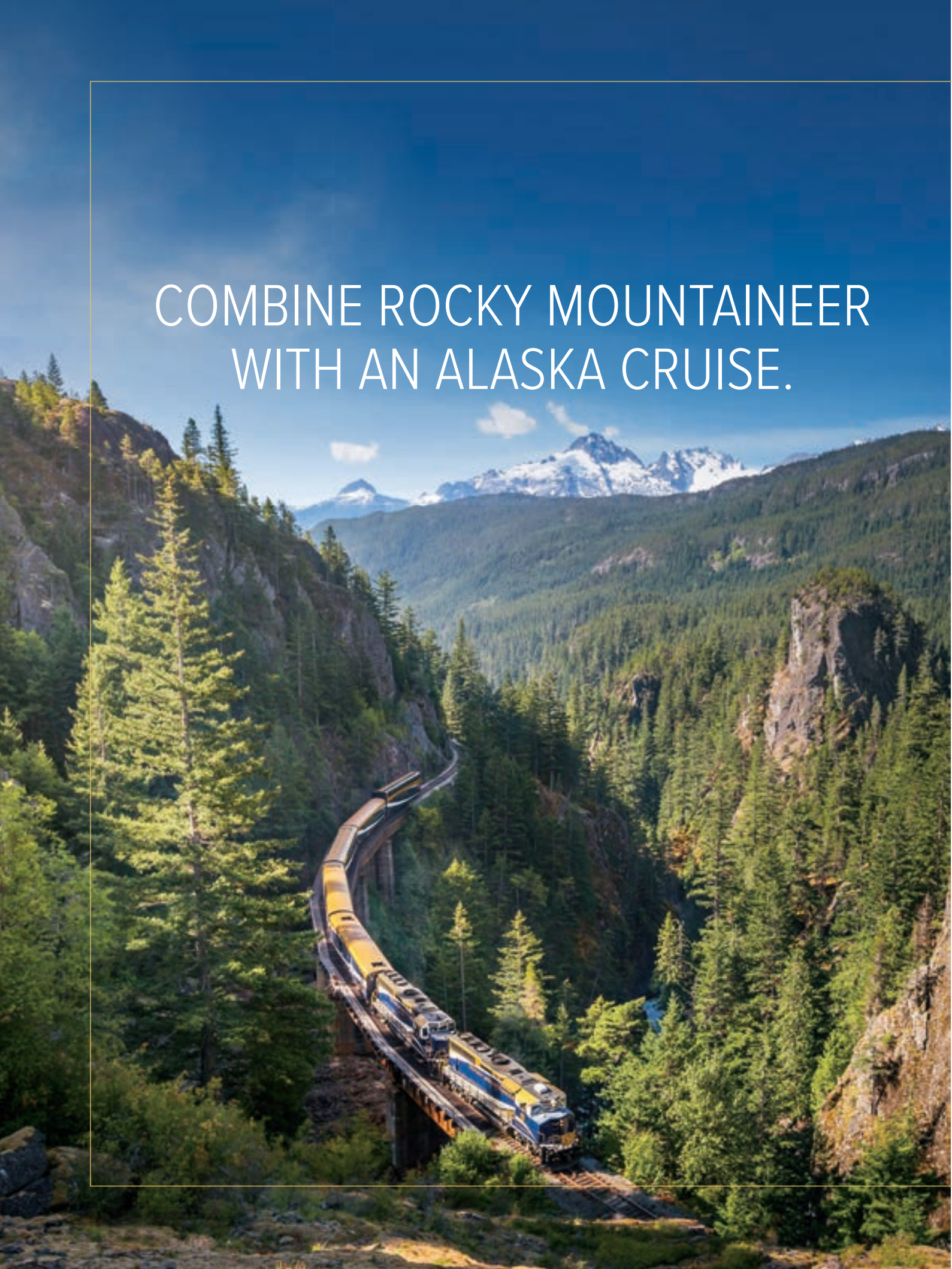
Overall, 2019 is up in all our markets compared to out-of-the-gate 2018 sales. We are only a few weeks into selling but excited about the increased capacity that our new 10 GoldLeaf domes, which will be added in 2019, will bring, along with new destination packages.

Although our demographic hasn't changed in terms of age, we have noted that the Boomers are seeking out more soft adventure in their holidays. We have reflected this trend by pairing a luxury journey on board Rocky Mountaineer with more adventure-based yet low-intensity off-train activities such as helicopter rides, guided hikes, Zodiac boat tours and city-cycling. We see this continuing as both the Rocky Mountaineer demographic gets a bit younger and the current guests start looking at how they can have a holiday that combines everything.

Our new destinations largely reflect the trend we're seeing above, where guests who are 50, 60 and 70 years old are looking to be pampered in luxury, as well as experience something a little different. The self-drive package option is becoming increasingly popular among those who want a bit of freedom in their holiday. We are still seeing large growth in group tours, but there is also an increase in independent guests. Our new packages are predominately self-drive, and offer overnight stays at unique lodges and hotels in the Canadian Rockies – some of which can only be accessed by helicopter and gondola! ⚓

Top left and right:
Maligne Lake, Jasper
National Park, Alberta

Iconic rail adventures
don't get any better
than this!



COMBINE ROCKY MOUNTAINEER WITH AN ALASKA CRUISE.

ROCKY MOUNTAINEER®

£580
PER COUPLE
IN ADDED VALUE

Did you know that Rocky Mountaineer guests share the same demographic profile as ocean and river cruisers? In fact, 40% of guests pair their journey with an Alaska cruise. From jaw-dropping icebergs, to the majestic Canadian Rockies, a Rocky Mountaineer journey is the perfect match.

Book a qualifying 2019 Rocky Mountaineer package before August 31, 2018 and receive up to £580 per couple in added value. Give our Vacation Consultants a call for more details.

Visit: rockymountaineer.com/agent | Call: 00800 0606 7372 | Email: sales@rockymountaineer.com

ABTA
The Travel Association

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CRUISE & MARITIME VOYAGES

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- Traditional British cruise experience
- Five smaller to mid-sized classic ships
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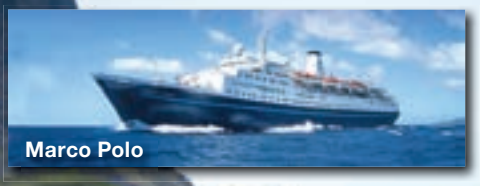
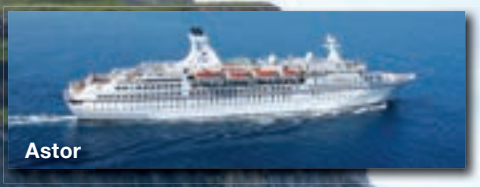
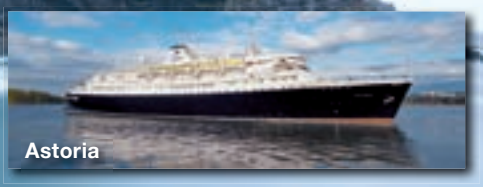
Programme Highlights

- Scottish Lochs, Glens & Islands
- Hidden Baltic Treasures
- 75th D-Day Anniversary Cruise
- Rouen Armada & River Seine
- Arctic & Greenland Expedition
- Canada in the Fall
- Land of the Northern Lights







Norwegian fjords – Baltic Cities – British Isles – Iceland – Canary Islands & Madeira – European Cities – Short Breaks – Round the World Cruise – World Cruise Sectors – Grand Circle South America – Caribbean & Mexico – Trans Panama Voyages to/from Australia & New Zealand – Christmas & New Year and Festive Breaks

12.5% Enhanced Basic Commission† · Promotional support · No direct booking discounts

Book Online at: www.cruiseandmaritime.com Call: 0844 414 6161

Agency Sales: 0844 414 6140 Brochures: www.trade-gate.co.uk

†Applies to sales achieved over £5k for 2017/18 cruises. Subject to availability. Terms & Conditions apply. *Book by 31st May 2018. Offers may be withdrawn without notice. Offered for sale in the UK by South Quay Travel & Leisure Ltd trading as Cruise & Maritime Voyages. ABTA V9945. ATOL 4619. Calls cost 5p per minute plus your telephone company's access charge.

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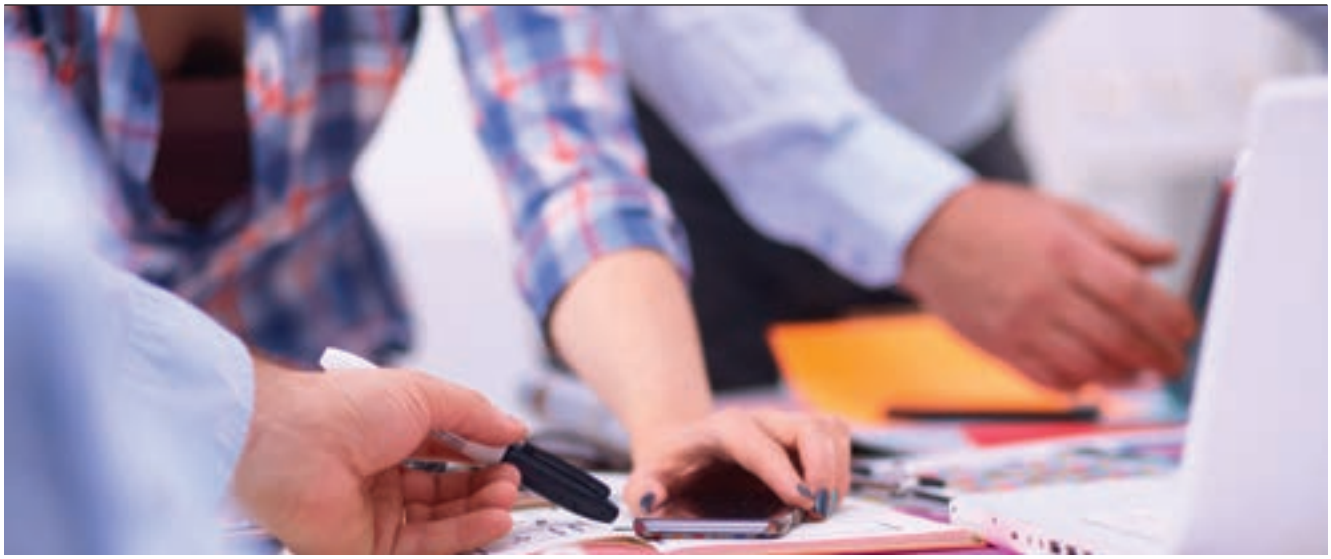


Making sense of marketing

Want to maximise your marketing output? Focus on key objectives, says Debbee Dale

Members of my team are often asked about marketing objective and strategy training sessions by companies that have seen a decline in calls, footfall or active visits to their website.

This is not because we are marketing specialists, but because we train people across a given business and often spend time with marketing divisions.

So, how you should manage your marketing? I believe you should consider your marketing objectives in line with your overall business objectives.

Ace your social media platforms

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram don't cost you anything but the time (and a little effort) required to build a following – but you must make content interesting and interactive. If you've invested time on content, you can successfully get your news out to people who may be interested in what you have to say.

Use your database – talk to past clients

It's much more cost-effective to target a repeat customer with offers that suit their needs and that interest them. Send communications via email for a faster turnaround and lower cost. Ensure customers have 'opted in' to receive messages, in line with the new GDPR legislation – but make your emails relevant and interesting to ensure that customers actually open those messages.

Explore cruise line offers

Have you taken time to understand cruise lines' offers, deals and promotions? It's a way of creating an exclusive message for your customers and giving you a competitive edge. You can then add things – like reductions or on-board benefits – to your marketing. Find out if someone has travelled with a cruise line before and pass on the information when booking; your customer may get benefits that won't cost you a penny – and you'll look like a real expert. Cruise line emails are packed with the latest offers and prices, so you can be first to market with that tactical offer, new sailing or ship launch.

Maximise online resources

Use the cruise lines' trade websites to compile pictures, logos and offers, and go to town with these on your marketing. The result will look professional and it won't cost you as much as having to source and fund these resources on your own. Sign up to CLIA and cruise line training programmes; time and money are invested in these as it's proven that agents who know more, sell more.

Impress your customer with detail

In what format does your communication reach your customer? If they telephone, what sort of welcome do they receive? If they come into your shop, what does it look like? Are they properly welcomed? Does the shop display the attributes you wish to highlight, such as quality, personal service, and professionalism?

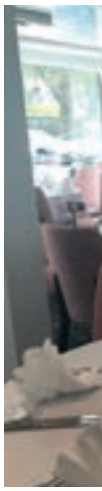
Do you give clients an information pack, a quotation, a card, a brochure, an invoice or other material? If so, what does this say about your business? Do you send 'welcome home' correspondence?

Source community groups or clubs, attend meetings and do a presentation. Let them know that people book with you and get testimonials – this is not about the holiday but the fact that YOU booked it!

Debbee Dale provides consultancy, training and coaching for businesses, and has designed award-winning online training solutions for ACE (Association of Cruise Experts, now CLIA), Norwegian Cruise Lines and Hurtigruten.

The new design features accents of blush pink

The Schmitter family

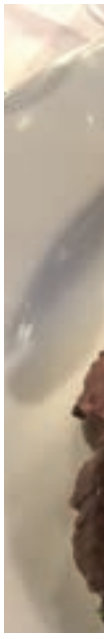


The ribbon is cut

MS RENOIR INAUGURATION

May was a busy month for family-owned cruise line CroisiEurope, with the launch of three new ships: Ms Van Gogh, MS Elbe Princesse and MS Renoir. This takes the total number of ships in its fleet to 55, which only goes to prove that river cruising is booming. We were in Paris – along with the entire Schmitter family – for the inauguration of MS Renoir, and to check out the ship. According to sales and e-commerce director Lucas Schmitter CroisiEurope has invested 45 million euros in its fleet over the past two years; MS Renoir has been completely redesigned and redecorated as a Premium Class ship, which is sure to go down well with passengers. The makeover features accents of blush pink, rose gold and black, giving an elegant, upmarket feel. Following an evening of good conversation and even better French cuisine, the following morning – in the presence of a brass band – the ribbon was cut by the ship's Godfather, who did the first inauguration back in 1999, with a piece given to guests as a souvenir. Congratulations MS Renoir – and happy sailing!

The splendid MS Renoir



The elegant dining room

The sun deck

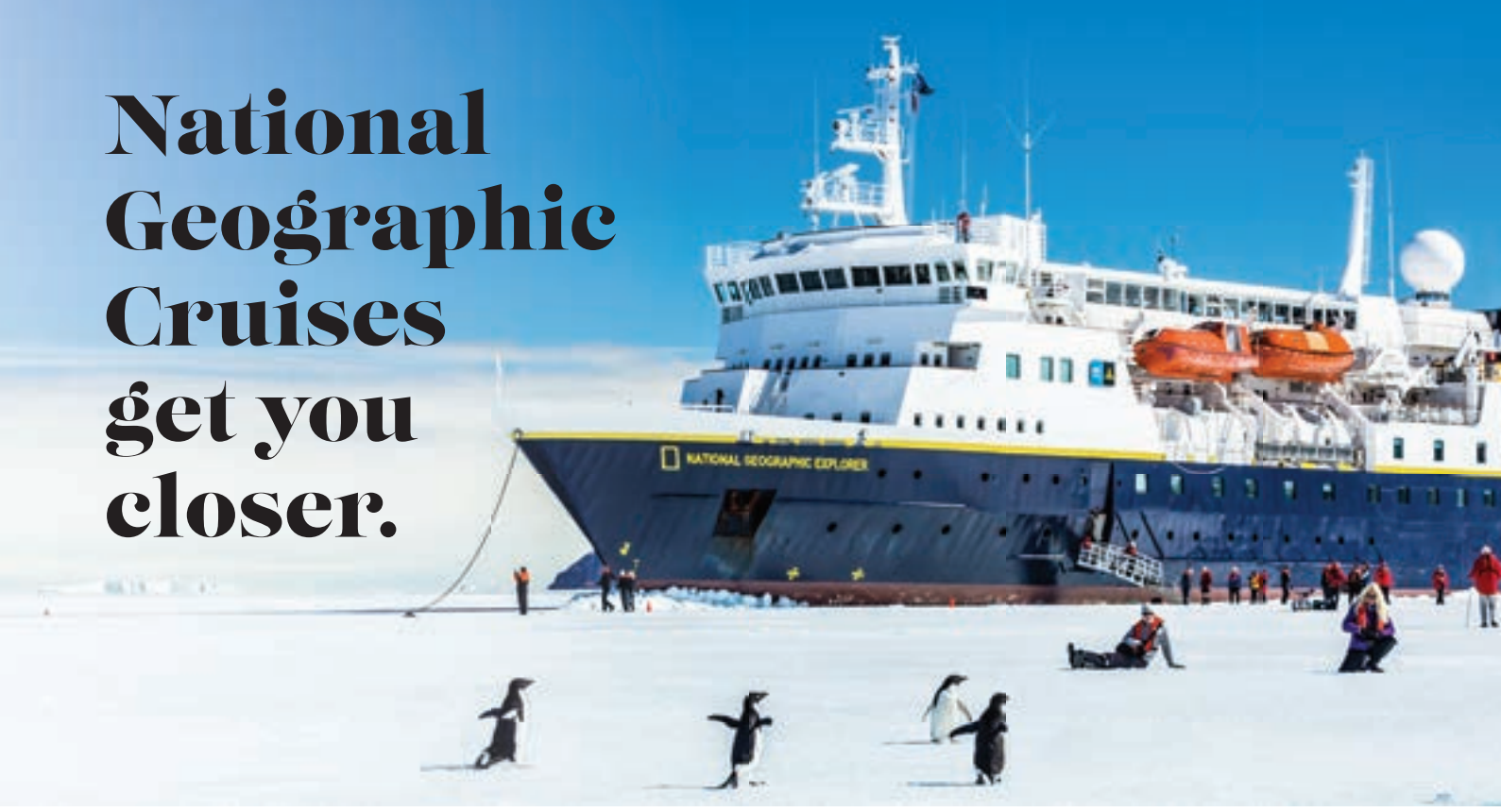
A band entertained guests

Fine French fare

Delicious cuisine on board

The stylish cabin

National Geographic Cruises get you closer.



Join our scientists, storytellers and adventurers on cruises that will increase your knowledge and deepen your understanding of the world we live in.

Travel has always been at the heart of what National Geographic does. The same passion for discovery and desire to understand the planet on a deeper level that inspired the earliest explorers is today embodied in the wide choice of trips we offer to over 80 destinations across the world.

Travelling with National Geographic experts and enjoying exclusive access to National Geographic-supported projects provides an unrivalled insight into each place we visit, from its cultural traditions and architectural heritage to its natural wonders, flora and fauna and history.

Our continuing support for scientists and educators around the world has always been an essential part of who we are. Simply by taking a trip with National Geographic, your customers are giving back; helping us to protect the planet for future generations.

EXPEDITION CRUISES

Our fleet of eight National Geographic-Lindblad expedition ships take your clients to some of the world's most remote places in style, exploring alongside a seasoned team — for example marine biologists and naturalists, as well as a National Geographic-Lindblad certified photo instructor trained to help your clients capture the sights on film. Flexible itineraries allow us to take advantage of wildlife sightings and other spotaneous opportunities. Plus, the smaller dedicated exploration ships are perfect for navigating narrow waterways and small harbours that larger vessels can't reach and are equipped with kayaks and Zodiacs for more up close exploration. Our expedition cruises can be booked direct with Fred.Olsen Travel Limited, the sales agent for the UK.

RIVER CRUISES

There is no better way for your clients to discover the grand cities, historic villages, and endless countryside along the world's great waterways than on a National Geographic River Cruise, operated in partnership with with Scenic Luxury Tours & River Cruises. A National Geographic expert enhances every journey with their insights, and in addition a National Geographic photographer joins each European sailing. Guests can choose from a wide range of included guided daily excursions, and enjoy luxury onboard amenities as well as the finest all-inclusive hospitality including butler service.

For more information visit: natgeoexpeditions.co.uk

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
EXPEDITIONS

Is your client a Luxplorer?

It seems that more and more people are searching for that truly immersive experience. With this in mind, we investigate the upturn in luxury expedition cruising

According to research carried out in August 2017, the worldwide order book totalled 89 cruise ships with deliveries scheduled between 2017 and 2026. The new generation of ships being built averages over 100,000GT, with several thousand berths per ship. However, smaller, more luxurious ships up to 60,000GT are also in increasing demand, with a particularly strong focus on expedition vessels.

As this type of cruise ship is generally aimed at exploring the North Pole and Antarctica, it needs to comply with the IMO's new Polar Code, which old vessels cannot do. It's therefore unsurprising to learn that around 30 to 40 existing expedition cruise ships, generally built in the 70s and 80s, are soon to be replaced by newer builds.

Launching in June 2018, Le Lapérouse will be the first of Ponant's six new expedition ships – the Ponant Explorers – built by Vard, a Norwegian subsidiary of Fincantieri. At 131m in length and with 92 staterooms, the vessels will reach some of the most remote areas on the planet.

All six vessels will also be fitted with the Blue Eye multi-sensorial underwater lounge, giving passengers a window onto the sea bed, with non-intrusive underwater lighting, and hydrophones integrated into the keel that retransmit the natural symphony of the deep water.

Polar exploration

The thrill of polar exploration consistently drives the sale of expedition cruises, aided by incredible itineraries that pull together veteran expedition teams of naturalists, scientists and photographers.

And where there is demand, there is always supply. Hapag-Lloyd's new luxury expedition ship, Hanseatic ›

Seabourn guests kayaking in Alaska

Get to know the Wave Awards Winner 2018: Best Adventure/Expedition Cruise Line

It may seem as though the entire world has been explored, however, genuine voyages of discovery are still possible. The 230-guest, state-of-the-art **HANSEATIC inspiration**, which will be launched in **October 2019 in Antwerp**, will be cruising not only in the **Arctic and Antarctic** but also in warmer water destinations such as **Cape Verde**, the **Great Lakes**, **South America** and **Amazon**, with numerous expedition activities and Zodiac landings. After almost a decade, we will be returning in the summer of 2020 to the **Great Lakes in North America.**

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- **NEW as of 2019: HANSEATIC inspiration**
- **Explore untouched regions**: a small ship on spectacular routes
- **Expand your horizons**: crew and scientists with worldwide expertise
- **Feel the thrill of expeditions**: on numerous Zodiac rides and landings
- **Experience safety in the polar regions**: thanks to the highest ice class for passenger ships
- **Travel respectfully**: committed to protecting the natural environment
- **Enjoy magical moments as an explorer**: with highest standards in terms of service and facilities
- **Even closer to nature**: plenty of deck space, a deck track at the bow, glass balconies and an on-board marina
- **Inspired by nature**: innovative and inviting design concept
- **The freedom to choose**: creative cuisine, a spacious spa area and a wide range of sports activities – always with an ocean view

For further information, please see our website **hl-cruises.com/new-expedition-ships**

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Please also contact our Sales Representative for UK and Ireland:
Aishling McLoughlin,
mobile +44 7852 488471,
aishling.mcloughlin@hl-cruises.com

Inspiration – the sister ship to Hanseatic Nature which debuts in April 2019 – will have its maiden voyage in October 2019 and boasts the highest ice-class rating for passenger ships.

In 2020, Crystal will launch Crystal Endeavor, which, at 19,800 GRT, will be the largest, most spacious expedition yacht in the world. But what is it about smaller luxury ice-class vessels that is generating so much interest?

"Many travellers today are placing a greater emphasis on the level of authentic experience they can have," says Chris Austin, Seabourn's senior vice president, global marketing & sales. "They want to experience the destination in a more up-close-and-personal way, immersing themselves in it rather than just seeing it."

Frances Armitage of Chimu Adventures agrees. "I think the rise of the experience culture is partly responsible. A growing demographic would rather spend their money on memories than material goods, and the Polar regions are the ultimate destinations, particularly for travellers that have seen a lot of the world's other continents."

Focusing on cruises to Latin America and Antarctica, Chimu Adventures hand-picks its itineraries and employs local support staff to ensure experiences are as authentic as possible.

"In areas such as Antarctica, only 100 people are allowed ashore at one time, so small ships (carrying usually less than 200 people) mean that you can get on land more often," explains Armitage. She also adds that smaller ships provide a more intimate experience, as well as a more tailored, gourmet food and drink offering.

The environmental factor

Akvile Marozaite, Silversea's expedition sales manager, UK, believes that it is the proliferation of documentaries that has also opened people's eyes.

"Programmes such as Blue Planet II and Planet Earth have put some of the iconic expedition cruising destinations on the map, while a growing awareness of climate change and concerns about the environment and wildlife have all had a favourable effect. The expedition cruise industry has always been an advocate of sustainable tourism, with an emphasis on inspiring people to protect the fragile environments that the ships visit through direct experiences and education."

The environmental factor is certainly reverberating round the cruise industry, with shipyard De Hoop announcing in November 2017 that new expedition cruise vessel Celebrity Flora, which debuts in May 2019, will feature a specialised design for the Galapagos Islands, and will be equipped with state-of-the-art, eco-friendly technology.

Meanwhile, Ponant recently announced the launch of its new polar expedition ship, due in 2021, powered ›

SELL IT

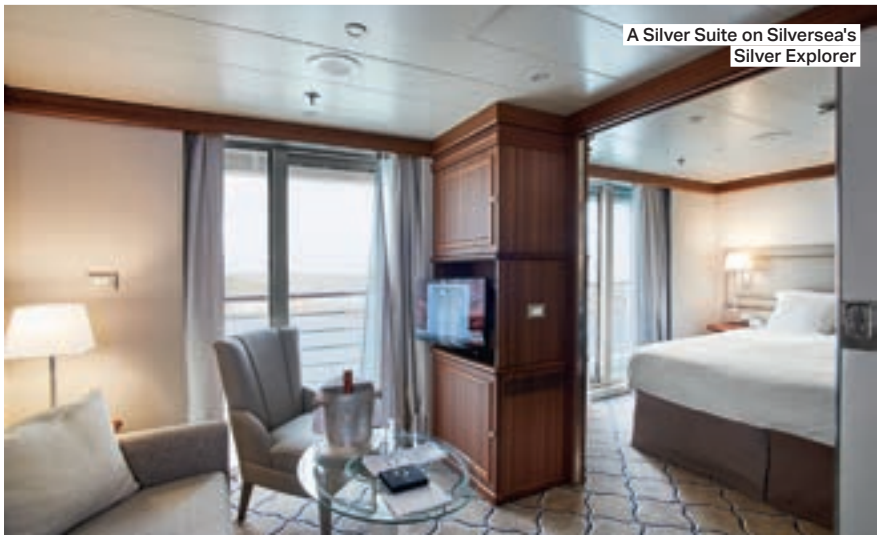
- Focus on a cruise line's unique features and offerings, and become an expert on the brand story by embracing any training resources.
- Explore the type of holiday a non-cruiser normally takes and how their requirements can be matched to a luxury cruise.
- Travel professionals should become part of their client's decision-making journey. The personal touch is key for our agent-guest interactions.

Chris Austin, senior vice president, Seabourn

- Expedition cruising is for those seeking a more immersive experience in lesser-known destinations, so advise clients to do their homework on their selected cruise.
- Suggest prioritising their time to make the most of their experience.
- Pre-book selected shore excursions early to avoid disappointment.

Mick Dupont, head of UK sales, Crystal

The Bistro Lounge, Crystal Endeavor



A Silver Suite on Silversea's Silver Explorer

by LNG, making it the world's first electric hybrid icebreaker cruise vessel.

However, a third additional factor is the luxury element itself, added Marozaite, which echoes a trend coined by the hospitality industry as 'luxploration'. Silversea's newest addition to its expedition fleet – Silver Cloud – has been highly popular since its relaunch in November 2017, attracting clientele interested in experiencing cruise destinations they might never have considered before, due to the previous lack of luxury accommodation and services. With amenities including free-flowing premium wines and spirits, gourmet cuisine, in-suite dining and full butler services, it's easy to see why.

New waters

Research carried out by CLIA shows that 27.2 million passengers are expected to cruise in 2018, compared to 25.8 million in 2017. This is almost 10 million more than the number of cruise passengers in 2009, largely down to the increase in cruising popularity in Asia.

In 2016, the Chinese became the second most cruising nation in the world, after the US and before the UK. Where 2016 saw 2.1 million Chinese take a cruise, this number will have more than doubled to well over 4 million by 2020, meaning that many cruise ship builders take Chinese taste and preferences into consideration.

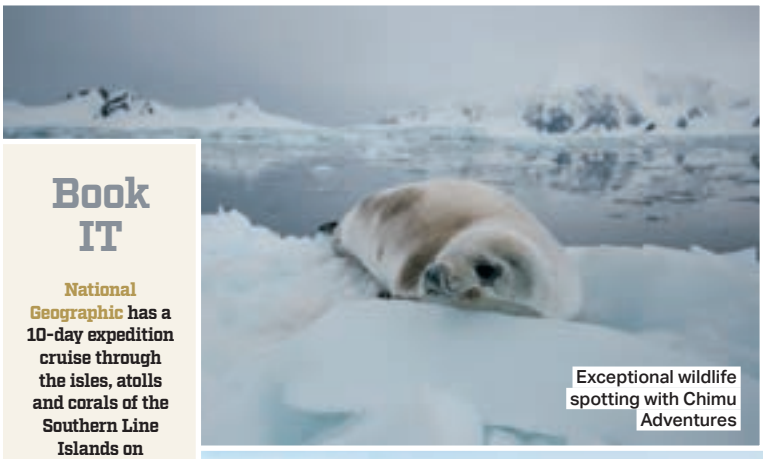
Once such example is Silversea's Russian Far East programme, which takes in Kamchatka, Chukotka, the Sea of Okhotsk and the Bering Strait, all hotspots for whales, Steller sea lions, Pacific walruses and seabird colonies.

"In 2019, Silver Explorer will, for the first time, offer the North East Passage – an exciting voyage for 'bucket-list' seekers," says Marozaite. "There are only a handful of people who have completed the passage, and it is promising to be an exceptional trip."

South America is also piquing interest, with highlights including Patagonia, the Chilean Fjords and the Peruvian coastline, but the iconic cruising grounds of Antarctica, the Arctic and Galapagos remain the strongest contenders.

Expedition stalwart Seabourn's adventures programme – Ventures by Seabourn – brings together experts and lecturers as well as optional Zodiac, kayak and hiking excursions that allow guests to see the landscape in a more informed, intimate way.

"We have just completed our fifth season in Antarctica and our guests continue to rave about the experience," says Austin. "Historically, if you wanted to sail to Alaska or Antarctica, you could do luxury or expedition-style travel, but not both. We set out to change that. Both of our Antarctica and Alaska & British Columbia programmes were designed to marry the two experiences into one." ⚓



Exceptional wildlife spotting with Chimu Adventures

Seabourn Quest in Antarctica

Book IT

National Geographic has a 10-day expedition cruise through the isles, atolls and corals of the Southern Line Islands on board Orion, taking in Rangiroa's lagoon and the peaks of Moorea. Prices start at £5,441pp, with departures in June and August 2018.

16 days aboard Silversea's Silver Cloud include savouring locally caught shrimp and visiting the best wineries in Chile. Culinary experiences and workshops, lectures and excursions will highlight the taste of South America. Departing October 2018. Prices start at £7,000.

WORDS: JULIA ZALTZMAN

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Symphony of the Seas

Taller than the Eiffel Tower (standing upright), Royal Caribbean's impressive mega ship is made up of 500,000 individual parts and features more than 13,347 pieces of artwork on board. The ship is spending its inaugural season in the Mediterranean

CENTRAL PARK
With more than 12,000 tropical plants, this open-air neighbourhood features walkways with nooks for reading and relaxing, shops and specialty restaurants. The expanded Park Café, with its communal table and outdoor bistro seating overlooking a central piazza, is perfect for meeting friends and people watching.

HOOKED
Royal Caribbean's first New England-style seafood restaurant will feature a coastal menu of fresh seafood and a raw bar complete with oysters harvested to order. Located at the front of the ship in the adults-only Solarium, the restaurant will offer expansive views of the open water.

VITALITY AT SEA SPA
Featuring a thermal suite and extensive treatment menu, the tranquil spa is the largest spa and fitness centre on the high seas.

ULTIMATE ABYSS
The tallest slide at sea. In fact the 10-storey slide is taller than The White House! A combination of 250-300 small LED lights and graffiti artwork is used to create a starry night and twister effect. The average time from top to bottom is 13.14 seconds.

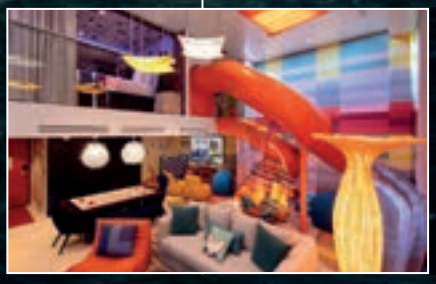
FAST FACTS

188
feet long

18
decks

6,680
guests

2,759
staterooms



ULTIMATE FAMILY SUITE
This two-level, 1,346sq ft suite offers more than enough room for the whole family to come together. Features include an in-room slide, a private cinema with an 85-inch HDTV, a floor-to-ceiling LEGO wall, and a 212-square-foot balcony with table tennis court and full-size whirlpool.

Destinations to Inspire You

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AZAMARA CLUB CRUISES®

Q&A

JOHN FAIR

UK sales director, CroisiEurope

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

I started on 1 March! I knew the CroisiEurope brand from a previous life and admired the company's passion and drive, as well as the technological innovation it brings to the industry in terms of new ship builds, establishing programmes on new rivers such as The Loire and its brilliant on-board service.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT THE CRUISE INDUSTRY?

The industry is simply a pleasure to work in. The growth being seen in all sectors – but especially river cruise – shows how the products and brands out there for customers are meeting customer needs and providing such high levels of service and delivery. It is a truly exciting industry to be in at present.

HOW IS YOUR COMPANY DIFFERENT TO OTHER CRUISE LINES?

CroisiEurope is family-run and has been operating for over 40 years. It is Europe's biggest river cruise operator with over 50 ships. The value CroisiEurope places on high levels of service on board, and its warm, friendly approach, mirror the family philosophy. This, combined with a unique product range, which includes traditional river ships, French canal barges and coastal cruises, puts us in a unique position in the marketplace.

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

Meeting as many travel agent partners as possible! Developing our trade presence is one of the main reasons I have been taken on in this role, and I believe this product will resonate with so many travel agents and their customers once they see the range of itineraries and the outstanding value the product represents.

IF AGENTS ONLY SELL ONE CROISIEUROPE ITINERARY THIS YEAR WHICH SHOULD IT BE?

It has to be the new MS African Dream, which sails on Lake Kariba in Zimbabwe and into the Chobe National Park. This is combined with a stay at our very own safari lodge called Cascades. I'm a huge fan of Southern Africa so can't speak highly enough of this stunning cruise.

CAN YOU GIVE US A DESCRIPTION OF A TYPICAL CROISIEUROPE CUSTOMER?

Our UK clients are discerning and like to combine comfort, value for money and exquisite food and wine with a deep dive into local history and culture.

TELL US ONE THING ABOUT YOUR LIFE OUTSIDE OF WORK THAT AGENTS MIGHT NOT KNOW.

Outside of work I enjoy spending time with the family, writing travel articles, cycling, cooking and the odd glass of decent red wine. I'm also a season ticket holder at Brighton and Hove Albion.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FACING CRUISE SALES?

Lack of general knowledge for both agents and customers on what river cruising offers for a holiday – and also the impression that it's for 'old' people. Nothing could be further from the truth, with most lines now offering activity-based cruises and active excursion programmes. In my experience, older people want to be active and some younger people want to simply relax, so why categorise a river cruise by age?

HOW DOES CROISIEUROPE WORK WITH THE TRADE?

To date, much of our trade business in the UK has been via group charters. However, our FIT business is now growing steadily and myself and the team will be aiming to foster partnerships with all agents who would wish to sell us. We offer a UK call centre, a 24/7 booking portal, fam trips and training programmes for any agent who would like them.

CV

May 2016 – February 2018
Industry consultant – clients include South African Tourism, Black Tomato, Adore Cruises and Cool Travel

June 2011– Apr 2016
Cosmos Tours and Cruises - head of cruise (June 2011 to Nov 2013); product and commercial director (Nov 2013 to Apr 2016)

Jan 2010– May 2011
ICE UK - managing director

Nov 2006 – Dec 2009
Totally Travel (1st4cruising) Ltd – commercial director

Oct 2004 – Nov 2006
Cinnamon Holidays – managing director

TOP THREE TIPS FOR AGENTS SELLING CRUISE...

1 Target both ocean cruisers and high-end hotel customers on your database and in your local area, as, for many, river cruising is the next logical step.

2 Make sure you take as many online training programmes as possible and, if offered, go on fam trips. There is no substitute for sampling a product before you sell it.

3 Match your client to the correct cruise line – each offers something unique. Understand what motivates them and what the cruise lines can do to meet those expectations.

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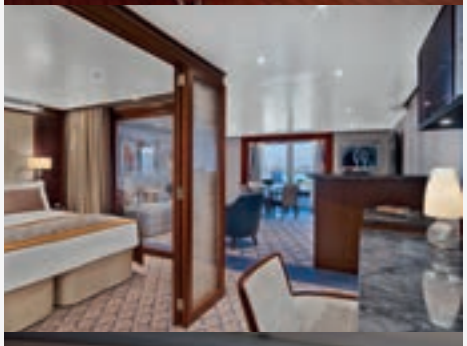

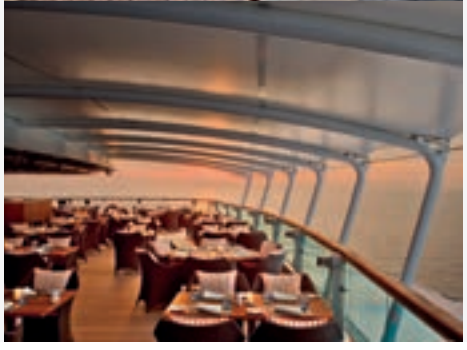

Introducing
SEABOURN OVATION

In May 2018 we welcome *Seabourn Ovation*, crowning the most modern and acclaimed fleet in ultra-luxury. Like her sister *Seabourn Encore*, the strikingly beautiful all-veranda suite ship delivers a wealth of innovative concepts and a host of illuminating ideas to delight the world's most discerning travellers.

Seabourn Ovation can slip into picturesque ports and hidden harbours. Yet she offers features and amenities rivalling much larger ships, including sumptuously furnished living areas and restaurants designed by the genius of Adam D Tihany, elegant settings for meals created under the guidance of world-renowned chef and restaurateur, Thomas Keller.

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For online training visit; seabournacademy.co.uk | For UK ship visits email: salessupport@seabourn.co.uk

Face painting on Uniworld ships

10 of the Best child-friendly cruises

We round up our favourite kid-friendly cruises that will keep the little ones amused and stimulated

1 MSC Cruise Line

Winner of Best Family Cruise Line at the 2018 Wave Awards, MSC understands families and is dedicated to providing everything they need: age-segmented kids' clubs, aqua parks, pools, 4D cinemas and bowling alleys. New on board Meraviglia is the Doremi Studio. Set up as a television studio with lights, cameras, a stage and green screen facilities, it also has the Doremi Lab with the latest technology, including 4D printing and CR gaming. A chef cooking competition, Family Disco and Doremi talent show are also included. Excursions include a Barcelona tour with overarching city views, plus the only amusement park for kids.

Sell it: Partnerships like the LEGO Family Experience Day make MSC an easy sell to families.

Book it: msccruises.com

Camp Carnival

2 Royal Caribbean

Royal Caribbean's complimentary Adventure Ocean youth programme offers young cruisers aged three to 17 an array of entertaining and educational experiences and activities infused with fun and excitement. On new ship Symphony of the Seas there's a multitude of family activities. These include the Ultimate Abyss (the tallest slide at sea), the Perfect Storm waterslides, two surf simulators, Splashaway Bay for kids, skating in the Studio B ice rink, a mini-golf course, a nine-deck-high zip line, rock-climbing walls, a basketball court, table tennis, and a number of pools.

Sell it: For those seeking luxury, the Ultimate Family Suite is two storeys of interactive, relaxing space which accommodates up to eight and includes a living room.

Book it: rccl.com ›

Star Wars command centre on Disney

3 Disney Cruises

If movies like Frozen or Star Wars are your client's kids' thing, Disney has a character-themed cruise just for them. Star Wars® Day at Sea has the characters on board as well as Star Wars-themed beverages and snacks, while Marvel® Day at Sea creates heroic encounters with Marvel® characters including big names from the film Black Panther. Kids' clubs include It's a Small World for under-threes, and the three-to-12-year-olds' activity centre, Disney Oceaneer, based on Disney characters. Edge is the lounge for tweens, with plasma TVs, computers and video games. Vibe is the chill-out zone for teens.

Sell it: Children love Disney characters, so these cruises are an ideal choice for families.

Book it: disneycruises.com

Marvel characters on Disney Cruise Line

6 Norwegian Cruise Line

Norwegian's ethos is to engage families so, on the new Norwegian Bliss, get ready for fun. There will be a range of amenities: an electric-car race track, open-air laser tag course, two pools, six infinity hot tubs, an Aqua Park and two water slides. The Splash Academy (ages three to 12) is for Guppies (six months to three years), Turtles (three to six years) and Dolphins (10-12 years). For teens (13-17) there's Entourage, with its own arcade. There's also the largest at-sea Go-Kart race track and entertainment, including the award-winning musical Jersey Boys, at The Bliss Theatre.

Sell it: "Cruise is the perfect option for a multigenerational trip. There is something for everyone, from adults-only areas to kids' and teens' clubs to keep youngsters entertained." Nick Wilkinson, MD Norwegian Cruise Lines.

Book it: ncl.com

4 Holland America Line

Holland America Line's Club HAL provides a range of activities throughout the fleet for ages three to 17. Kids' clubs provide supervised, age-specific activities for ages three to 12. Younger cruisers (three to seven) can enjoy soft play and slides and creative activities. There is even babysitting during sea days (additional charge applies). Tweens (eight to 12), have their own area featuring video games, air hockey, football, Kinect for Xbox 360, and LED screens for gaming. The Loft is a place for 13-to-17-year-olds to call their own. They can practice culinary skills and learn to make mocktails. Club HAL and the Loft operate during sea days and on port days for kids aged three to 12.

Sell it: Holland America welcomes infants older than six months and can arrange baby food, nappies and refrigerators for a nominal fee.

Book it: hollandamerica.com

An aqua park on Carnival

5 Carnival Cruise Line

Known for its party atmosphere, Carnival is a no-brainer for a family cruise. This cruise line carries more kids than any other, and features Camp Carnival, for ages two to 11, Circle "C" for 12- to-14-year-olds, and Club O2, for 15-to-17-year-olds. Camp Carnival has play areas stocked with games and toys, arts and crafts centres and activity walls. Dining includes a children's menu, while poolside restaurants include a pizzeria and frozen yogurt station. Camp Ocean, a new marine-themed children's programme, will immerse children aged two to 11 in the wonders of the sea.

Sell it: Book early for the Dr Seuss character breakfast – it only happens once per cruise and is limited to 70 people; price just $5.

Book it: carnival.com

Kids love cruising with Uniworld

Families love A-ROSA cruises

7 A-ROSA River Cruises

Having carried 2,000 children in 2017 (up 25 per cent from the previous year), it is obvious A-ROSA is dedicated to family cruising. A-ROSA offers free cruises for children under 15 on every departure and itinerary with flights/rail and transfers included. Dining is flexible, so families can simply show up and eat when the restaurant is open. Children can visit the ship's bridge, meet the captain, see the ship going through the locks and generally feel part of the whole experience. There is a multitude of outdoor games on the sun deck such as shuffle board, mini golf and a variety of excursions.

Sell it: One child cruises for free for every full-paying adult and a variety of cabin options are available, including family or interconnecting cabins, suites and/or cabins with one extra bed.

Book it: arosa-cruises.com

8 Uniworld

Uniworld has created Generations cruises specifically for families, with special programmes, events and excursions. There are onshore excursions as well as on-board activities, including activities for Junior Cruisers (four to 12 years) and Teen Cruisers (13-17 years). Generations departures include Family Hosts to oversee activities, and ships have a reserved dining table for younger guests. There are cooking classes with dessert-making, craft workshops, a games room, kids-only movie nights and onshore excursions tailor-made for families.

Sell it: Travellers aged four to 17 years receive 25 per cent off the cruise fare when accompanied by an adult.

Book it: uniworld.com

Medieval activities on Uniworld

9 CroisiEurope

CroisiEurope's family-themed cruises sail through Portugal, Spain, Italy and Croatia delivering fun for the family. While parents are on excursions, kids can do their own thing at the Mini Club for four-to-eight-year-olds or the Junior Club for the nine-to-12-year-olds; both have trained and certified staff. These packages include a free river cruise for kids up to 16, or a 30 per cent discount for kids under 16 on sea cruises.

Sell it: For those on a budget, CroisiEurope cruises tend to be great value for money.

Book it: croisieurope.travel

10 Tauck

The fun starts as soon as families step aboard a Tauck riverboat. Tauck Bridges specialises in holidays with families in mind, so kids won't get bored. Each of the four river cruise itineraries incorporates fun, hands-on activities such as cooking classes, storytelling, cultural explorations and pizza making. Excursions range from cycling to an evening at a castle, investigating catacombs and learning medieval games. For families in a suite, each is equipped with a sofa bed.

Sell it: The price is truly all-inclusive and includes all shore excursions, unlimited beverages on board, gratuities for staff and local guides.

Book it: tauck.co.uk

Making a splash on CroisiEurope

Playing cards on Tauck

WORDS: LYNN HOUGHTON

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17 PAGES OF MARKETABLE ITINERARIES, SHIP REVIEWS & DESTINATION INSPIRATION

Your World

St John's, Antigua

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The last frontier

An Alaskan adventure contains everything you could want from a North American cruise: beauty, wonder and excitement

Expedition cruising with Silversea

Whether your client loves wildlife, landscapes, history or adventure sports, an Alaskan cruise can be whatever they want it to be. From grizzly-spotting and dog-sledding to kayaking round glaciers or simply marvelling as the beauty of the famous Inside Passage unfolds before you, this pristine wilderness offers it all – and cruising is simply the best way to see it (even the state capital, Juneau, is accessible only by sea or air). America's last frontier is on every serious cruiser's bucket list and there's a vast range of itineraries on offer. Read on to discover our pick of the best...

Strike it rich

There's gold in them thar hills. At least, that's what 19th century prospectors thought. The Klondike Gold Rush saw the sparsely populated Alaskan coastline inundated with 100,000 fortune-seekers, many congregating in the small town of Skagway. Just 900 souls remain there today, but they keep up the old boardwalks, built in the boom years, giving the place the eerie feel of a Spaghetti Western ghost town (visit the Red Onion saloon to slam back a shot of whiskey). Clients can set sail on **Norwegian Cruise Line's** Bliss, which is home-ported in Seattle for regular trips to Skagway and Juneau, and they'll feel like they've struck gold.

Departs 4 August. Prices from £1,569pp.

Inside story

An intricate lattice of islands, coves and bays stretching some 500 miles up the Alaskan coast, the Inside Passage offers shelter for shipping and world-class sightseeing for cruisers. Smaller vessels have always been the best way to experience this realm of mighty glaciers and snowcapped mountains – all the better to let the enormity of it wash over you – and **Azamara's** Quest is one of the finest. And while necks will be constantly craning to catch the next glimpse of natural beauty which is around every corner, don't forget to look down – these are whale-watching waters, too.

Departs 14 June, 2019. Prices from £2,788pp. ›

Norwegian Bliss

Crystal: combining adventure with luxury

Go native

As this sparsely populated state welcomes ever more visitors to admire its amazing wildlife and landscape, there's a danger that the authentic Alaska could fade from view. Luckily **Alaskan Dream Cruises** has other ideas. This is a family-owned company with local roots that go back generations, and its Alaska's Inside Passage Sojourn will visit small towns and villages that other cruise companies pass by. For an in-depth encounter with the region's Native American tribes, their culture and art, look no further.

Departs 8 September. Prices from £3,400pp.

Where the wild things are

Alaska represents a roll-call of great American wildlife. From brown bears and bald eagles to bison and reindeer, they all roam this vast terrain. Admittedly, **Princess Cruises** can't guarantee that a grizzly will turn up on cue. However, its Denali Explorer itinerary gives its clients the best possible chance to see these magnificent creatures – and many others – in their natural environment. Starting with a six-night Inside Passage cruise aboard Star Princess, clients are then transferred to the Denali National Park, where they can make use of the cruise line's very own treehouse (yes, really), which gives a stunning vantage point over the habitat-rich landscape below.

Departs 1 September. Prices from £1,404pp.

Four-legged friends

Alaska isn't just a place to see the sights. There are plenty of adrenaline-pumping activities on offer too, and on **Oceania Cruises'** 10-day Glacial Adventures voyage, clients can try their hand at a favourite Alaskan sport. First they'll be flown high above the glaciers and icefields for a spot of 'flightseeing'. Then they'll meet a bunch of professional mushers to learn what it takes to control a pack of sled dogs. And then it's their turn to either stand up and take the reins or sit back, letting the experts do the work, and admire the scenery while hurtling across those dazzling Alaskan landscapes.

Departs 23 July. Prices from £5,339pp.

A route less travelled

Naturally enough, most Alaskan cruises focus on the Inside Passage. But when you consider that this is the largest US state by some distance, you'll realise there must be a whole lot more to see – and that's where the expedition cruising experts at **Silversea** come in. Silversea's 144-guest Silver Explorer ventures to the northern part of Alaska, and even a bit of Russia, with an itinerary that's guaranteed to take the breath away. Guests will encounter a vast array of birdlife, and enjoy expert-led excursions into the heart of this untamed landscape – and if the cold starts to bite, they can thaw out with a long soak in a hot spring.

Departs 13 August. Prices from £7,600pp.

Running with the dogs on an Oceania cruise

See brown bears in their natural habitat

Fare's fair

Holland America Line has a long history in the region, offering a wide range of itineraries at very accessible prices – perfect for clients on a budget. Its seven-night Alaskan Explorer cruise takes in all the highlights: the capital city of Juneau, the majestic Glacier Bay, the colourful fishing town of Ketchikan and, of course, all that natural beauty along the way. In fact this could be the perfect way to get all the family to Alaska without dipping into the kids' university funds!

Departs 4 May 2019. Prices from £898pp.

Alaskan Dream Cruises offers in-depth adventures

Creek Street, Ketchikan

Ice with that?

Alaska is all about the glaciers. Over huge spans of time, these moving mountains have sculpted the incredible landscape around them – and they are still there today, as jaw-dropping as ever. Spending two days in Glacier Bay National Park, **UnCruise Adventures'** Glacier Bay Small Ship cruise showcases the most amazing – and thanks to a fleet of kayaks, you can paddle right up close. The blue ice paradise that is the Dawes Glacier is worth the trip on its own, but add whale-watching, bear-spotting, skiff rides and an excursion to Tongass National Forest, and it begins to sound like the active cruiser's trip of a lifetime.

Departs 10 August 2019. Prices from £3,500pp.

Crystal clear

You need to be at the top of your game to keep up with everything that Alaska can throw at you – and while a day's trekking, kayaking or sledding is always a thrill, it might leave clients in sore need of a little TLC. If that's the case, they'll probably be glad they booked with **Crystal Cruises**.

Its Alaskan Grandeur cruise is a straightforward package, ticking all the obvious boxes and nothing more, but the real highlight is the 922-guest Crystal Symphony itself. Thanks to its spacious suites, fabulous restaurants and truly dreamy spa, it's just like stepping aboard a personal haven of floating luxury.

Departs 10 August 2019. Prices from £3,486pp.

Fun for the family

Even nature's wonders can't keep junior cruisers entertained indefinitely, but if clients choose to book with **Disney Cruises**, a vast range of on-board activities will ensure the children stay happy once glacier-fatigue sets in. And it's not all fun and games – Disney's Junior Ranger educational programme will help them gain a deeper understanding of the sights they've seen. And who knows, it may turn out to be the start of a lifelong passion...

Seven-night Alaskan cruise departs from Vancouver on 3 September 2018. Prices for a family of four start at £5,277. ⚓

WORDS: JOSH STEPHENSON

6 of the best... European ports

The old town and harbour, Tallin

AMSTERDAM

Amsterdam is famous for its dykes, windmills, canals and tulips. It is also one of the most popular cruise ports in Europe. The city is located on the North Sea where the Port of Ijmuiden and the Felison Terminal (for cruise passengers) are found. The cruise terminal has two berths: the Monnickendam Quay and the Volendam Quay. Further inland, the North Sea Canal is the location of the Passenger Terminal at Piet Heinkade 27 - frequently used for Rhine river cruises. These days this city, which lies at or below sea level, is just as well known for its favourite transport – bike riding – as it is for trendy bars, restaurants and attractions such as the Rijksmuseum.

VENICE

Nestled on Italy's north-east coast, this ancient city is one of the world's most scenic cruise destinations. The Venezia Terminal Passeggeri (VTP) manages the terminals for Marittima (8 berths), St. Basilio and Riva dei Sette Martiri, which are all located on the north-west side of the city. VTP has announced the construction of a multipurpose boarding tower to assist with boarding and disembarkation of passengers - up to 2,000 per hour. For those on a day excursion, St. Basilio has a convenient water taxi rank to take visitors straight to the Grand Canal. Not only is this canal a truly iconic waterway, but St. Mark's Square is also an enormous draw.

HIGH-PROFILE CRUISE PORTS THAT DELIVER IN TERMS OF LOCATION AND SERVICE

BARCELONA

A city of contrasting districts – Gothic-style buildings sit next to classical properties, which are intertwined with Victorian and avant-garde neighbourhoods – Barcelona is truly unique. The Port of Barcelona currently has six cruise terminals: four of them (the largest ones) are located at the Adossat pier, while two more are located at the Barcelona wharf next to the World Trade Centre and within walking distance of the Christopher Columbus Monument. There is a shuttle connecting Adossat pier to the monument which is located at the end of La Rambla. The Adossat pier terminal has a VIP lounge, a retail centre and a restaurant.

Port of Barcelona

TALLIN

Tallin, the capital city of Estonia, boasts possibly the most beautiful inland fortress city in Europe. Cruise ships are accommodated at the Tallinn Old City harbour and there are berthing places for four to seven cruise ships (depending on the size of the vessels). In 2018 there are plans for 341 cruise ship calls and up to 565,000 cruise passengers are expected. The old town is 1km from the Old City Harbour and is a wonderful place for sightseeing, shopping, and dining. Though it only happens every five years, if your client is in town when the Estonian Song Festival is taking place, it is a unique experience – particularly for culture vultures.

DUBROVNIK

Jutting into the clear blue waters of the Adriatic Sea, the medieval fortress city of Dubrovnik is possibly the most popular cruise destination in the Mediterranean. Larger cruise ships dock in Gruz Harbour, a suburb of Dubrovnik old town, located just 3 kms from the town. Smaller vessels dock outside the city walls in the Old Harbour and passengers are then tendered to the dock. This beautifully preserved city became a UNESCO world heritage site in 1979 and has been firmly on the cruise tourism map ever since. A walk along the 25-metre-high walls that surround the city provides spectacular views. Another suggestion for clients is to take the funicular to the mountain top that overlooks the city.

SANTORINI

The horseshoe-shaped isle of Santorini is the remnant of a collapsed volcano in an explosion that took place many millennia ago. Cruise ships sail into the bay (it's too deep to drop anchor) and boatmen tender passengers to the port of Skala. Vistors can still ride a donkey up the steep switchback trail from the port to the clifftop above (600 steps), where the capital city of Fira is located. Many visitors choose the funicular to the top instead. The port of Athinios – also accessible by tender – is the place from which coach tours depart. Cruise clients often visit the village of Oia located at the very tip of the island. A boat transfer from Skala port to Ammoudi port takes 20 minutes. ⚓

Barcelona has six cruise terminals

WORDS: LYNN HOUGHTON

Are you a Cruise Star?

CRUISE STARS 2018

We're so excited to announce our all-new Cruise Stars Awards 2018 – created to acknowledge and reward cruise industry talent in sales, marketing and management across the country

The Cruise Stars Awards shine a spotlight on the brightest and best talent in the cruise holiday sector – the 'ones to watch' in the industry.

Open to travel agents who sell cruise holidays, as well as the cruise lines and brands themselves, categories include sales, marketing and management. All are free to enter.

The awards were conceived in 2016 as the Rising Stars Awards with an under-35 age restriction. While this has now been lifted, Cruise Stars will continue to recognise young talent, with categories for those under 35.

The winners of last year's awards, hotly contested across the board, included Poppy Outram from Bolsover Cruise Club and AmaWaterways' Augustus Lonsdale.

This year we are also pleased to announce our nine regional travel agent awards, designed to recognise and honour cruise talent across the country.

Finalists will be invited to a prestigious lunchtime event at London's Grand Connaught Rooms on 17 November 2018, with our winners receiving industry-wide recognition, as well as the opportunity to be featured in the pages of Cruise Trade News in 2019.

With 21 categories there's something to suit everyone, no matter what your experience or role. So what are you waiting for? Enter now – the deadline is 13 July – and get ready to propel your cruise career to the next level!

Visit **cruisestarsawards.com** – and good luck! ⚓

Last year's Rising Stars with CTN editor Rbecca Barnes, far left, and publisher Andrew Say, centre

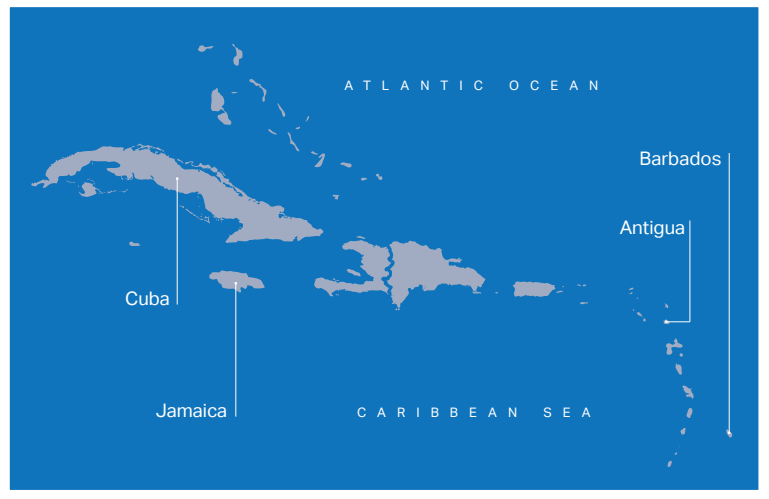
"Winning the overall cruise agent award in 2017 made my year. Having your hard work and service to your clients recognised by industry leaders is the ultimate reward for anyone, and inspired me to keep striving to be the best I can be!"

Poppy Outram, senior cruise consultant, Bolsover Cruise Club

Conjuring up images of fine white-sand beaches and idyllic hideouts among swaying palms flanked by turquoise water, the Caribbean Sea is the ultimate cruise destination, remaining immensely popular among Brits.

It's easy to understand the attraction of a Caribbean cruise. The region makes for a gloriously hot winter-sun getaway and a cruise is the best way to see several islands in a single trip.

Popular destinations include Jamaica, home of reggae, rum and jerk chicken, where highlights include the terraced waterfalls at Dunn's River Falls. Antigua, meanwhile, offers charming English culture – such as afternoon tea and cricket – that hails back to its colonial past, as well as historic attractions that inlcude English Harbour and Nelson's Dockyard National Park.



Islands in the sun

Lesser-visited gems, fashionable enclaves and classic islets can all be discovered on a Caribbean cruise

Barbados is the most 'British' of the Caribbean islands. Here a popular excursion is Friday Night Fish Fry at Oistins Bay, where tourists can rub shoulders with locals at this popular outdoor barbecue meet-up.

Andy Harmer, senior vice-president membership and director CLIA UK & Ireland, said: "In 2017 the Caribbean, including the Bahamas and Bermuda, was the third most popular cruise region for British cruise passengers.

"It saw an increase of just over three per cent on 2016. Plus, last year the Caribbean attracted the youngest average age of cruisers at 52 years old, against an average of 56 for all British cruise customers.

"The Caribbean retains its position as one of the top-selling cruise destinations thanks to the diversity of the ships available in the region, the choice of islands and the different experiences they offer, plus, of course, the stunning scenery and sunshine.

"A Caribbean cruise is still seen by many as one of the 'must-do' travel experiences, it's one to tick off the bucket list. Thanks to the incredible array of ships with a mind-blowing array of on-board amenities there's never been more choice."

New to the region for 2018/2019 will be **Holland America Line's** latest ship Nieuw Statendam, which will spend its inaugural season exploring golden beaches and sunkissed skies on round-trip Fort Lauderdale cruises, including calls at Half Moon Cay, the line's private Bahamian island.

Private islands are a huge draw in the Caribbean and **Princess Cruises** passengers will have a choice of new excursions, including a stingray beach encounter and clear-floor kayak lagoon ride, when they land on the cruise line's newly upgraded 40-acre private island, Princess Cays, this year.

Princess Cruises vice president UK and Europe Tony Roberts said: "We're continuing to develop Princess Cays as the premium Caribbean hideaway.

"Its powder-white sand and crystal clear seas make it the ultimate place to relax, unwind and enjoy yourself."

Meanwhile, Cuba takes centre stage in **SeaDream Yacht Club's** Caribbean spring 2019 itineraries, with the introduction of new immersive sailings, allowing passengers to travel in style by megayacht, departing directly from Havana or Cienfuegos for a discovery tour circling the island.

Jannicke Rognstad, vice president at SeaDream, said: "Cuba is changing now in noticeable ways, and for many there is a desire to see it before it loses its identity.

"It truly is one of those 'you have to see it' experiences. Pictures and second-hand accounts won't do it justice." ›

Seabourn visits St Maarten

FIT FOR A ROYAL

Princess Cruises is offering up to £300pp discount on air travel for selected 2018 and 2019 Caribbean sailings for bookings made by 30 April 2018. A seven-night Western Caribbean cruise on Royal Princess includes Grand Cayman, Costa Maya and Cozumel. Prices start at £1,019pp, including one-night hotel stay, flights and transfers.
princess.com

CUBA LIBRE

SeaDream Yacht Club offers a seven-day voyage around the fascinating island of Cuba, from Havana to Cienfuegos, taking in Trinidad, Cayo Largo, Isla de Juventud and Maria la Gorda in 2019. Fares start at £3,992pp for an ocean-view state room and include drinks with meals, gratuities and one complimentary land activity.
seadream.com

SEVEN-NIGHT SYMPHONY

Crystal Cruises guests can enjoy an upmarket sun-drenched voyage through tropical isles, from crystalline waters in Turks & Caicos to coral reefs in Grand Cayman and quirky treasures in Key West, on a seven-night cruise round trip from Fort Lauderdale aboard Crystal Symphony. Cruise-only prices start at £1,752pp on 24 November 2019.
crystalcruises.co.uk

NEW HORIZON

A six-day Western Caribbean round trip from Miami on board Carnival Cruise Line's new ship, Carnival Horizon, visits Ocho Rios, Grand Cayman and Cozumel. Ship features include a WaterWorks park and tropical-inspired Havana staterooms and suites. Inside staterooms start at £459pp in September 2018.
carnival.com

SELLING TIPS

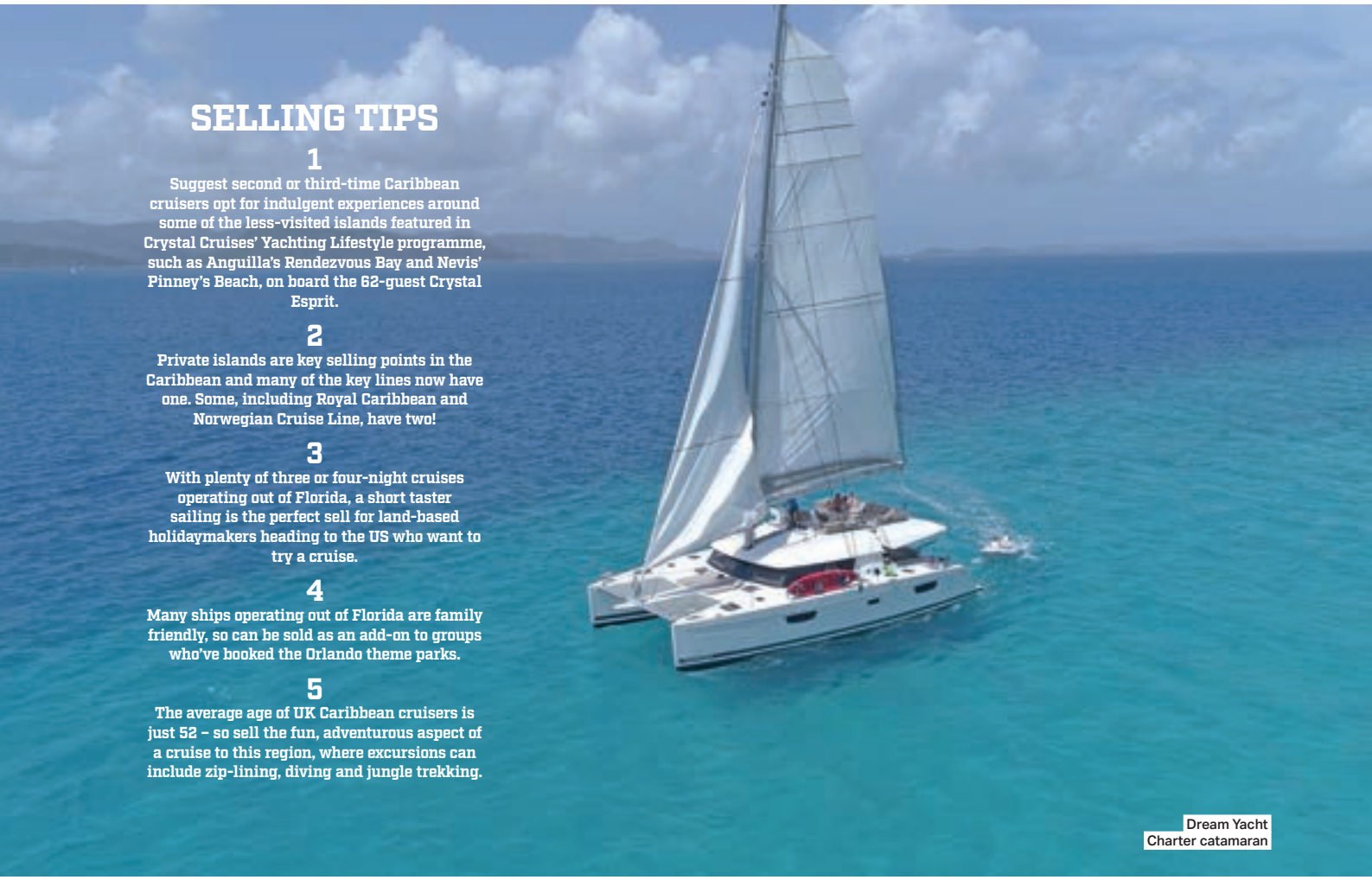
1
Suggest second or third-time Caribbean cruisers opt for indulgent experiences around some of the less-visited islands featured in Crystal Cruises' Yachting Lifestyle programme, such as Anguilla's Rendezvous Bay and Nevis' Pinney's Beach, on board the 62-guest Crystal Esprit.

2
Private islands are key selling points in the Caribbean and many of the key lines now have one. Some, including Royal Caribbean and Norwegian Cruise Line, have two!

3
With plenty of three or four-night cruises operating out of Florida, a short taster sailing is the perfect sell for land-based holidaymakers heading to the US who want to try a cruise.

4
Many ships operating out of Florida are family friendly, so can be sold as an add-on to groups who've booked the Orlando theme parks.

5
The average age of UK Caribbean cruisers is just 52 – so sell the fun, adventurous aspect of a cruise to this region, where excursions can include zip-lining, diving and jungle trekking.



Dream Yacht Charter catamaran

LIVE THE DREAM

For something a little more exclusive and intimate, Dream Yacht Charter offers a seven-night Tobago Cays Dream cruise on board a staffed catamaran with a maximum of 12 cabins. Cruises run weekly until 6 December 2018 from Port Louis in Grenada. The cruise visits Carriacou, Union, the Tobago Cays and Petit St. Vincent. Prices start from £928pp, cruise only.
dreamyachtcharter.co.uk

CHRISTMAS GETAWAY

Fred. Olsen offers a 14-night Caribbean Christmas and New Year fly-cruise on Braemar, leaving Bridgetown, Barbados on 20 December 2018. It includes Castries, St George's, Willemstad, Basseterre, Road Town, Grand Turk, and Philipsburg, arriving in Bridgetown for an overnight stay, before disembarking on 3 January 2019. Fly-cruise prices start from £2,599 per person.
fredolsencruises.com

ISLAND HOPPING

Seabourn has a seven-day Yachtsman's Caribbean cruise on board the all-suite Seabourn Odyssey in December 2018. The ship departs St Maarten, calling at St Kitts and Nevis, Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Guadeloupe, St Lucia and Port Elizabeth in Bequia, and finishing in Bridgetown, Barbados. Cruise-only prices start at £2,299 pp in an Ocean View Suite.
seabourn.com

SEASONAL SAILING

Holland America Line's Nieuw Statendam's first Caribbean cruise season features four and seven-day sailings, including a 23 December 2018 Christmas cruise that calls at Amber Cove, Dominican Republic; San Juan, Puerto Rico; St. Thomas, in the US Virgin Islands; and Half Moon Cay. Four-day cruise fares start at £499pp; seven-day fares from £799.
hollandamerica.co.uk

WORDS: **LISA JAMES**

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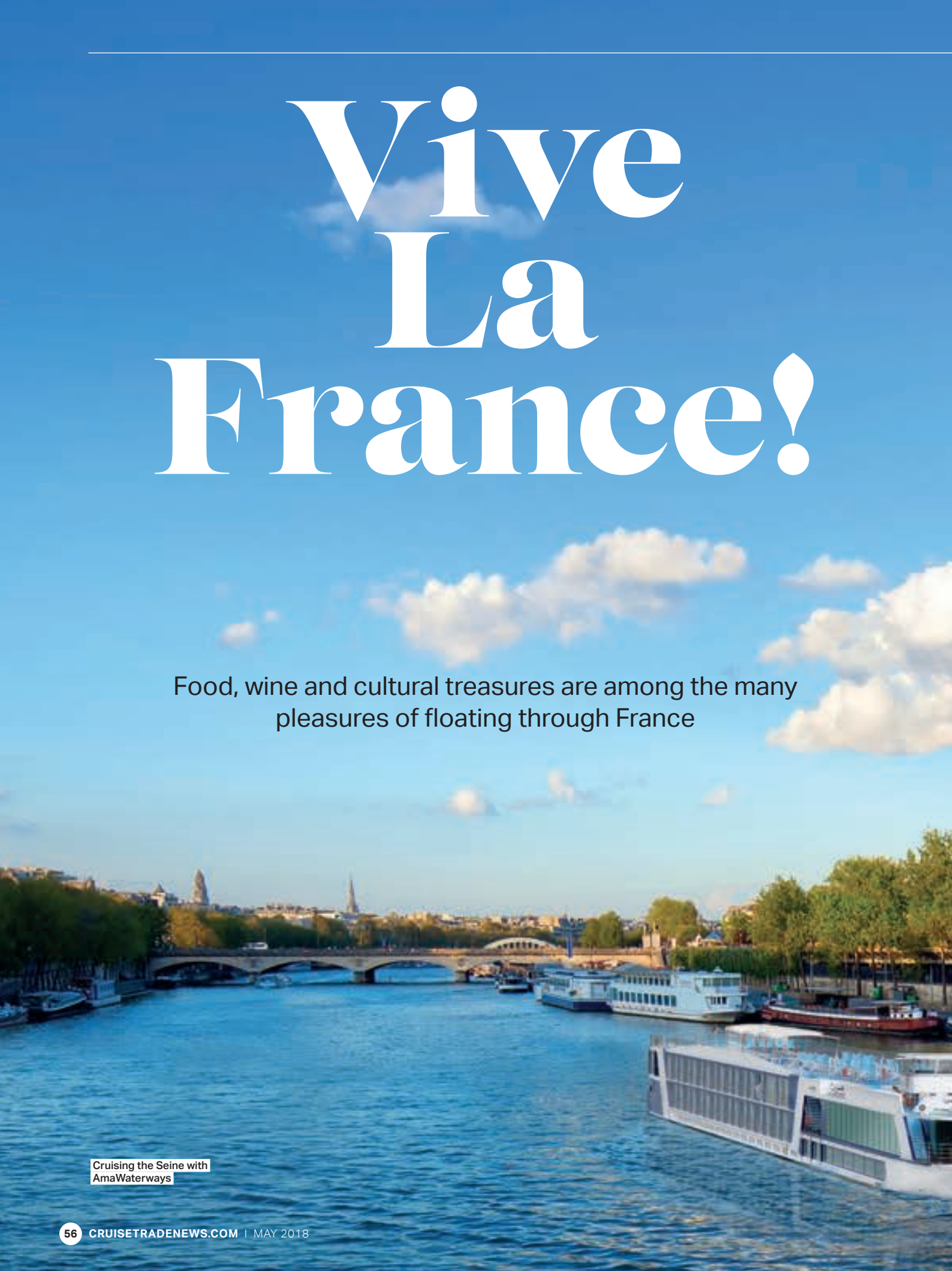
Vive La France!

Food, wine and cultural treasures are among the many pleasures of floating through France



Cruising the Seine with AmaWaterways

Picturesque scenery, gardens that inspired artist Claude Monet, famous cities, poignant wartime memorials and the lavender fields and white horses of the Camargue. These are just some of the sights waiting to be discovered on a French river cruise – and that's before you even mention the world-famous food and wine.

Last year, the number of ships was boosted with the addition of **Amadeus** Provence, sailing on the Rhone and Saone, and **Uniworld's** Joie de Vivre on the Seine. This year, **CroisiEurope** debuted the new 110-passenger vessels MS Renoir on the Seine and MS Van Gogh on the Rhone. There are also new itineraries and refurbished vessels, so it's a great time to tell clients what France has to offer.

Andy Harmer, director CLIA UK & Ireland, said: "For river passengers who have 'done' the two big players, the Rhine and the Danube, a French river cruise is an excellent choice. The French rivers, dominated by the Rhone and Seine, have seen a steady increase in passenger numbers over the last five years.

"Selling river cruises in France also means agents are able to offer customers tailor-made travel options. For example, clients sailing on the Seine might grab the chance to add a pre or post-cruise stay in Paris, or even a trip to Disneyland Paris if they're travelling as a family. Plus, travel options, including self-drive, train and air, make this a truly flexible area of the river cruise market."

The Rhone and Saone take passengers into the heart of southern France, and Seine itineraries all feature Paris. Other rivers include the Garonne, flowing through south-west France, the wine-growing region of Bordeaux and the chateau-lined Loire, available on CroisiEurope's innovative modern paddlewheeler Loire Princesse, which is designed to cope with the river's shallow water.

This year CroisiEurope introduced an extended six-night Loire itinerary to include an overnight hotel stay in Paris, followed by an excursion to two fairy-tale chateaux – Chambord and Chenonceau – before joining the ship.

John Fair, the line's UK sales director, said: "The Loire is ideal for customers who have sailed the main French rivers and want something different."

Hotel barges offer the opportunity to explore the tranquil network of narrow rivers and canals. CroisiEurope has also extended its barge programme with a new six-night cruise from Paris to the Petit Seine on the 22-passenger Raymonde, featuring a Champagne tasting and visit to the medieval town of Troyes. As part of a £500,000 fleet-wide upgrade, **European Waterways** has renovated its 12-passenger L'Impressionniste, which cruises in southern Burgundy, and its eight- ›

SALES TIPS

1
Normandy sailings, with tours to the D-Day landing beaches, will suit customers interested in wartime history.

2
Recommend a barge cruise for an intimate floating house party experience or full boat charter to groups of family and friends.

3
With shorter periods of sailing than Rhine and Danube itineraries, switch sell to clients that enjoy city breaks.

4
Showcasing the country's renowned cuisine, French cruises always go down well with food and wine lovers.

5
Culture-rich excursions include truffle hunting, wine tasting and the opportunity to blend personal bottles of Cognac.

passenger barges L'Art de Vivre in northern Burgundy and Anjodi on the Canal du Midi. The barge specialist is also enhancing its itinerary in the Champagne region with updated menus and wine-tasting excursions.

G Adventures has introduced the Burgundy River Cruise Adventure Southbound itinerary, which is ideal for active clients. The seven-night Dijon round trip, aboard a 22-passenger barge, includes wine classes with a sommelier and a 24-mile bike ride, stopping at vineyards and villages.

APT's new Freedom of Choice activities feature in its seven-night Rhone Treasures cruise, with the chance for passengers to play golf at the Grand Avignon Golf Course and take a guided bike tour around Lyon. Other cruise highlights include joining a farmer and his dog to search for truffles, and dinner at L'Abbaye de Collonges, formerly owned by the acclaimed chef, the late Paul Bocuse.

Uniworld's Joie de Vivre, meanwhile, provides a real taste of France as the ship has a Parisian-style cafe and the line's first demonstration kitchen.

Chris Townson, managing director of Uniworld UK, said: "Uniworld's excursions and experiences, both on board and ashore, bring to life the French 'joie de vivre', with cooking classes, authentic dining in Joie de Vivre's Le Bistrot, explorations of Paris like a local, visiting the gardens which inspired Monet and, for golf enthusiasts, the chance to play atop the cliffs on the Normandy coastline."

For 2019 **Shearings Holidays** will feature two new cruises. There will be a May sailing on the Loire aboard CroisiEurope's Loire Princesse, available as an eight-night coach tour or five-night rail or air package. Additionally there will be a seven-night New Year Seine cruise on A-Rosa Viva, also featuring flexible travel options.

Also for next year, **AmaWaterways** will be offering a new four-night pre-cruise land package on the Taste of Bordeaux itinerary, taking in the cultural and gastronomic centres of Bilbao and San Sebastian in northern Spain. Before joining the ship, passengers can also enjoy the beaches and famous oysters of the resort town of Arcachon on the French Atlantic coast.

Finally, it's worth noting that **Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines** features combined ocean and river cruises on its ship Braemar. Departing from Southampton, itineraries include navigations on the Seine, Gironde and Garonne rivers, with excursions that include a Bordeaux vineyard tour and a visit to Monet's house and gardens at Giverny. ⚓

SELL IT

AMADEUS RIVER CRUISES' seven-night Lyon round-trip cruise aboard Amadeus Provence is priced from £2,099pp, departing 16 August 2018, including all meals, drinks with lunch and dinner, flights and transfers.
0808 115 8312
amadeus-rivercruises.co.uk

APT offers the seven-night all-inclusive Rhone Treasures itinerary from Arles to Lyon on AmaCello from £3,745pp, departing 23 August 2018, including all meals and drinks, excursions, tips, flights, transfers and VIP home pick-up service.
0800 046 3002
aptouring.co.uk

UNIWORLD's seven-night Paris and Normandy round-trip cruise from Paris on Joie de Vivre is from £6,419pp for departures in July and August, 2018. Fares include all meals, drinks, excursions, tips and transfers.
0808 281 1125
uniworld.com

CroisiEurope's Loire Princesse

The famed white horses of Camargue

A cabin on CroisiEurope's Jeanine barge

European Waterways barge cruising

WORDS: JEANNINE WILLIAMSON

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BOOK EARLY

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CRUISE STARS 2018

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WHO SHOULD ENTER?

The awards are open to **travel agents** who sell cruise holidays, as well as the **cruise lines** and **brands** themselves. Categories include **sales**, **marketing** and **management** and this year the awards will also recognise and reward outstanding **regional travel agents** across the country.

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- ★ Celebrate your achievements
- ★ Get rewarded for your work
- ★ Being a finalist shows you are an industry leader
- ★ Finalists are invited to the awards presentation lunch on 16th November 2018 at the De Vere Grand Connaught Rooms in London.

FREE TO ENTER!

To view the categories and criteria and enter online visit

www.cruisestarsawards.com

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Brought to you by cruise TRADE NEWS

Welcome to the house of FUN

If the brief is non-stop fun for all the family, you simply can't beat a Carnival cruise. CTN's editor partied hard on new ship Horizon

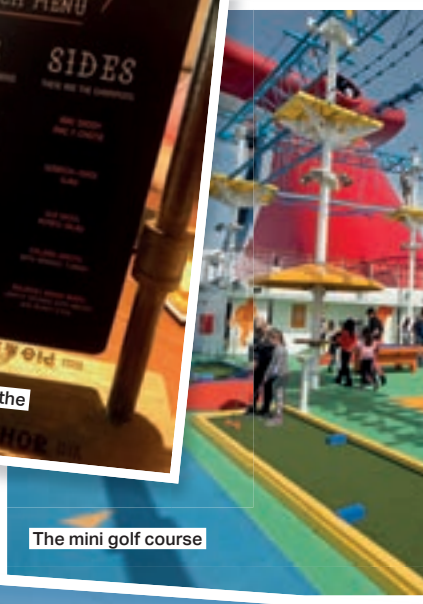
"It's like Royal Caribbean on steroids!" I overheard someone saying as we left Barcelona port in the sunshine. And as I looked down at the high-energy cruise director throwing shapes in front of the pool while encouraging guests and an assortment of human-sized furry characters to do the same, I could see what they meant.

You see, there ain't no party like a Carnival sail-away party, and as soon as the DJ mixed in the first track, the members of the multi-generation audience were more than happy to let themselves go. Minutes later, a perfectly formed conga line snaked around the pool.

Innovative and eco-friendly, Carnival Horizon is the newest ship in the fleet and the second in the line's Vista class, with 15 decks, 1,967 cabins and a total guest capacity of 4,977. The inaugural cruise was on 2 April; the ship will homeport in Miami for a schedule of six and eight-day Caribbean cruises from September 2018. ›

Dr Seuss WaterWorks

On the menu at the Pig & Anchor


The mini golf course

Bonsai Teppanyaki

The new motto is 'choose fun' and on Horizon, the good times and laughter literally never stop. Wherever you go, there are happy guests who look like they're having the time of their lives.

While there's huge amounts to do inside the ship, at venues that include a spa, a casino, a well-equipped fitness centre, an IMAX theatre, and a 'thrill' cinema experience, it's outside that the concept really comes alive.

As I explored deck 12 (Spa, Sports and Waterworks), I spotted a basketball game in full swing. The mini golf was just as popular, and there's also a suspended ropes course and jogging track.

The cruise line carries more children than any other – they welcomed 800,000 last year – and it's easy to see why. The star of the show for kids is the first ever Dr Seuss-themed WaterWorks park, with two slides and a PowerDrencher tipping bucket.

All ages will love the 800ft-long SkyRide, a two-lane suspended cycling course high above the ocean.

With a ship of this size, you'd be forgiven for thinking you'd probably need a map to get around. In fact, it is surprisingly easy to navigate, and I didn't get lost once.

The Carnival Hub app helps with familiarisation, while another great tech feature are the smart lifts – simply choose your destination deck on the touch screen; you're then instantly assigned a particular lift which takes you straight there.

When the sun is blazing in the sky and the kids are in the kids' club (which is available day and night), grown-ups can retreat to Serenity, an adults-only area with lots of sun loungers, cabanas and a bar. Healthy lunches are available at the salad bar, while staff are always on hand to bring you a drink.

The colourful décor is in keeping with the energy of the ship and its staff. My comfortable standard balcony cabin was accented with uplifting blues and yellows, and contained everything I needed: plenty of storage and hanging space, a sofa, flat screen TV with movies on demand, fluffy towels, lots of pillows, and a Grohe power shower. You won't find branded toiletries in the bathroom, however.

My room steward was friendly and efficient, keeping everything spotless when I was out and about.

Cycling SkyRide style

The adults-only Serenity retreat

Shopping heaven at Victoria's Secret

SELLING HIGHLIGHTS

1
Passengers are a refreshing mix of ages and nationalities – there are friends to be made around every corner

2
Dining options are plentiful and the food is of a very high standard – you can even get a pizza at 4am

3
Kids will LOVE it and won't want to get off

4
Adults are also catered for with excellent facilities and entertainment

5
The on-board shopping is first class, with designer and high street retail options to suit all budgets

For a ship that holds so many guests, the food is of a very high standard; I did not eat one thing that I didn't like. The two-level main dining room has an elegant ambience and the food is excellent, giving the speciality restaurants more than a run for their money.

There's also plenty of choice; speciality eateries include JiJi Asian Kitchen, the new Bonsai Teppanyaki, and the authentic Italian Cucina del Capitano.

The one that people are talking about, however, is US celebrity chef Guy Fieri's Pig & Anchor Smokehouse Brewhouse, where you can indulge in meat smoked in-house over hickory wood, mac 'n' cheese and scratch-made slaw, washed down with one of the ship's four craft beers, which are brewed on site.

If your clients like to shop till they drop, they'll love Horizon's two-level mall in the atrium, with Michael Kors, Kate Spade, Hublot watches and the brand new Victoria's Secret all in attendance. Plus, kids will love Cherry On Top, which serves up sweets and ice cream, as well as flowers and gifts.

After dark, the pace doesn't slow down. From movies under the stars with popcorn to the Punchliner comedy club and Havana, an authentic Cuban-themed bar, there's a never-ending choice of things to do and see.

It's hard to choose where to have a drink as there are watering holes everywhere you look; we managed to sample the cocktails at the Alchemy bar which were first class. We also had a great time dancing to 70s and 80s classics at the nightclub in the Limelight Lounge, which was packed with revellers till the early hours.

Need a pick-me-up to get you through the stresses of life? Forget prescription drugs and book a Carnival cruise. It's the anti-depressant of the future, and I guarantee you'll smile till your face aches. I know I did. ⚓

BOOK IT

A six-day Western Caribbean cruise round trip from Miami on 25 November, calling at Ocho Rios, Cozumel and Grand Cayman, costs from £949pp, including return flights.

WORDS: REBECCA BARNES

Focus on Rail Experiences

Rail-sail packages offer your clients the best of both worlds for a real land/sea adventure

A window on the world...

Harking back to the golden age of travel, when countries were crossed in days rather than hours and the emphasis was on enjoying the journey rather than just 'getting there', rail-and-sail holidays offer the perfect combination for passengers who want to add a touch of adventure to their cruise holiday.

"We love rail at Great Rail Journeys and think it is the perfect add-on to a cruise holiday, because it maintains the relaxing style of slow travel that the customer will have already enjoyed," says Lindsay Dixon, head of trade sales at **Great Rail Journeys.** "It also avoids using up valuable holiday time on check-ins and luggage drops and offers direct city access without having to battle traffic," she adds.

Hilary Strath, head of marketing for **Rocky Mountaineer,** comments: "Agents looking to give their clients an additional way to experience a country should offer us alongside their cruises. For any clients looking to see the stunning scenery of Alaska, a Rocky Mountaineer journey can be easily added to the beginning or end of a cruise, leaving from major cruise ports like Vancouver and Seattle. In the UK, nearly 50 per cent of all packages sold include an Alaska cruise pairing."

Whether it's a cruise through Alaska's glacier and fauna-studded landscapes combined with a thrilling train ride across the Rocky Mountains, or a trip on the iconic Orient Express combined with a leisurely cruise in the Med, the following four fab rail cruises are guaranteed to have your clients queuing to book.

Mighty mountains and fantastic fauna

The recently revamped trans-Andean railway, a historic line travelling from the country's capital, Quito, to the port town of Guyaquil via the mighty Andes mountain range, offers a fabulous way to discover the diverse landscapes of Ecuador. Best of all, your clients can combine this thrilling four-day train trip on steam and diesel-powered locomotives with a cruise to see the legendary fauna and flora of the Galapagos Islands.

What's so great? The switchback descent of the 262-foot Devil's Nose cliff face, the friendly welcome in countryside lodges and ranches, a culinary walking tour of Ecuador's capital, Quito, and meeting giant tortoises, blue-footed boobies, and other indigenous fauna on the Galapagos islands

Book it: Journey Latin America offers a 14-night Ecuador by train and Galapagos cruise from £4,164 per person, including flights.

Musical heritage and Caribbean cruising

Enjoy a three-night stay in Elvis Presley's homeland, Memphis, followed by a six-hour train ride through Bayou swamps to New Orleans, culminating in a leisurely six-day cruise from New Orleans to discover the colourful Caribbean resorts of Montego Bay, Grand Cayman and Cozumel.

What's so great? Soaking up the musical heritage of America's Deep South, visiting Graceland – Presley's former home – enjoying the legendary musical vibe in New Orleans and lapping up the Caribbean's laid-back lifestyle and legendary beaches.

Book it: Cosmos offers a 14-day Memphis, New Orleans & Western Caribbean Cruise from £2,261pp, based on an 8 October 2018 departure.

Glam travel and legendary port calls

In terms of slow travel it doesn't get much more glamorous than this legendary sail-rail combo that includes a stylish departure from London Victoria aboard the Belmond British Pullman, followed by a trip through the Alps to Venice aboard the Orient Express and culminating in a seven-day cruise on the **Azamara** Quest, with calls in some of Croatia's most charming ports, including the UNESCO Heritage city of Dubrovnik and the island of Hvar, renowned for its hilltop fortress and Renaissance-era cathedral.

What's so great? Enjoying the luxury of travelling on the legendary Orient Express, revelling in a gondola tour of Europe's most romantic capital, visiting Dubrovnik's pedestrian-only old town lined with elegant baroque churches and Renaissance buildings, and swimming in the crystal waters of Montenegro's stunning Kotor Bay.

Book it: Azamara Cruises offers a 10-day Venice Simplon-Orient Express & Med Cruise from £4,599pp, based on a 16 August 2018 departure.

Mighty mountains and icy vistas

Combining two of North America's wildest and most spectacular landscapes, this exciting rail-sail trip combines a four-day train ride across Canada with a seven-night **Holland America Line** Alaska cruise.

What's so great? Exploring the picturesque mountain resort of Jasper, enjoying the dramatic scenery of the Continental Divide, gasping at the wild rushing waters of Hell's Gate in the Fraser Canyon, then enjoying a seven-night Alaskan cruise along the Inside Passage spotting glaciers and wild animals, while learning about the region's Gold Rush-era history.

Book it: Rocky Mountaineer offers a 16-day Rocky Mountains and Alaska rail cruise combo from £3,659pp, based on a 6 July 2018 departure. ⚓

Capture memories on a Rocky Mountaineer rail trip

SELL IT

Talk up the time factor: Travelling by water and by land, your clients will have much more time to explore.

Sell the history: A rail-cruise combines two of the most iconic forms of travel, so impress clients with some historical facts.

Use your imagination: "Think of rail for destination-led enquiries both short haul and long haul – e.g. many customers may not even know they can do it by rail [India's Golden Triangle, Vietnam and Cambodia]," advised Lindsay Dixon.

WORDS: HEIDI FULLER-LOVE

"We constantly evolve to give customers the kind of holiday they want"

Mike Bowers, national sales manager at **Shearings Holidays,** talks royalty, river roaming and Rudesheim...

Why is your travel company the best of all travel companies?
Shearings Holidays features river cruises across Europe – from the main rivers such as the Rhine, Danube and Seine, to Portugal and the Douro Valley, and the Black Sea. There are options to suit all budgets, from three-star with great lead-in prices to premium standard with all-inclusive drinks. For total flexibility, cruises can be combined with coach, rail or flight options, and there is a variety of themed options, from festive breaks to food or music-focused cruises. We've also recently introduced small ship cruises along the Croatian Coast.

If Shearings was a famous person, who would it be?
It would have to be the Queen. She's a British institution and long standing with traditional values, but not afraid to move with the times. I like to think that sums us up pretty well. Shearings are a household name and have been taking people away on holiday since 1903, but we are constantly evolving to give customers the kind of holiday they want.

What's the funniest thing that's happened to you on the road?
Once I took 40 agents on a fam trip to Belgium. The driver parked his coach in Brussels before settling in for the night.

Her Majesty is a British institution

The Black Sea

When we went to get on board the next day we found a vibrant market in full flow and no coach. We soon found out that it was 60km away in a compound. After complaining about the poorly located and illegible signs we were refunded the fine. It wasn't funny at the time though!

What's the strangest question that you've ever been asked about river cruises?
Some people ask if the river ships depart from the UK – it would be an interesting experience crossing the North Sea or Bay of Biscay on some river ships!

How many of your river cruise ships have you sailed on?
I reccently went on a five-day Seine cruise on AROSA Aqua which was an all-inclusive trip, plus I've sailed on other ships we feature, including the Virginia, Rotterdam, Da-Vinci and Serenade 2. I have also experienced hospitality on others, including the CroisiEurope ships that we feature at various CLIA river conventions in Europe.

Mike is a fan of wildlife photography

What do you love about river cruising?
I love the fact that you get to explore places that you wouldn't usually visit – my recent trip included stops at Vernon and Rouen, and they were lovely medieval towns. I love that they usually berth close to the heart of everything and I can explore on foot at my own pace. I also like the fact that they carry smaller numbers of people and never feel crowded.

Which port would you definitely recommend disembarking in and why?
I'd get off at every port every time because there is always something to see and enjoy, even if it is an old favourite like a cake shop. On the Rhine I'd say Rudesheim because, in addition to the charming cobbled streets and half-timber houses (some housing wonderful beer halls), you can also jump onto a cable car and get up into the hills for some great views – and to stretch your legs.

Which river cruise is on your bucket list and why?
That would be our Spectacular Danube to the Black Sea cruise on the MS Serenade 2 because it travels through Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria over 15 days. Just think of all the amazing places I'd see !

If you didn't work in the industry, what do you think you would be doing?
I'd like to think it would be something to do with wildlife and nature: photographer, park ranger, researcher or journalist.

German cakes are worth disembarking for

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Locations in 2018:

10th May	**Manchester**
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21st June	**Bedford**
28th June	**London**
17th October	**Nottingham**
31st October	**Newcastle**
6th November	**Liverpool**
8th November	**Tonbridge**
15th November	**Guildford**

Agent feedback from 2017 Cruise challenges

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

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

THE cruise CHALLENGE

cruise TRADE NEWS

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*Based on two people sharing the same stateroom at the current on board price of a 14-night sailing. **Based on three additional guests sharing a stateroom with guest 1 & 2. Full terms and conditions apply, see cruisingpower.com for details.

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