

cruise

TRADE NEWS

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6

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OCTOBER 2018



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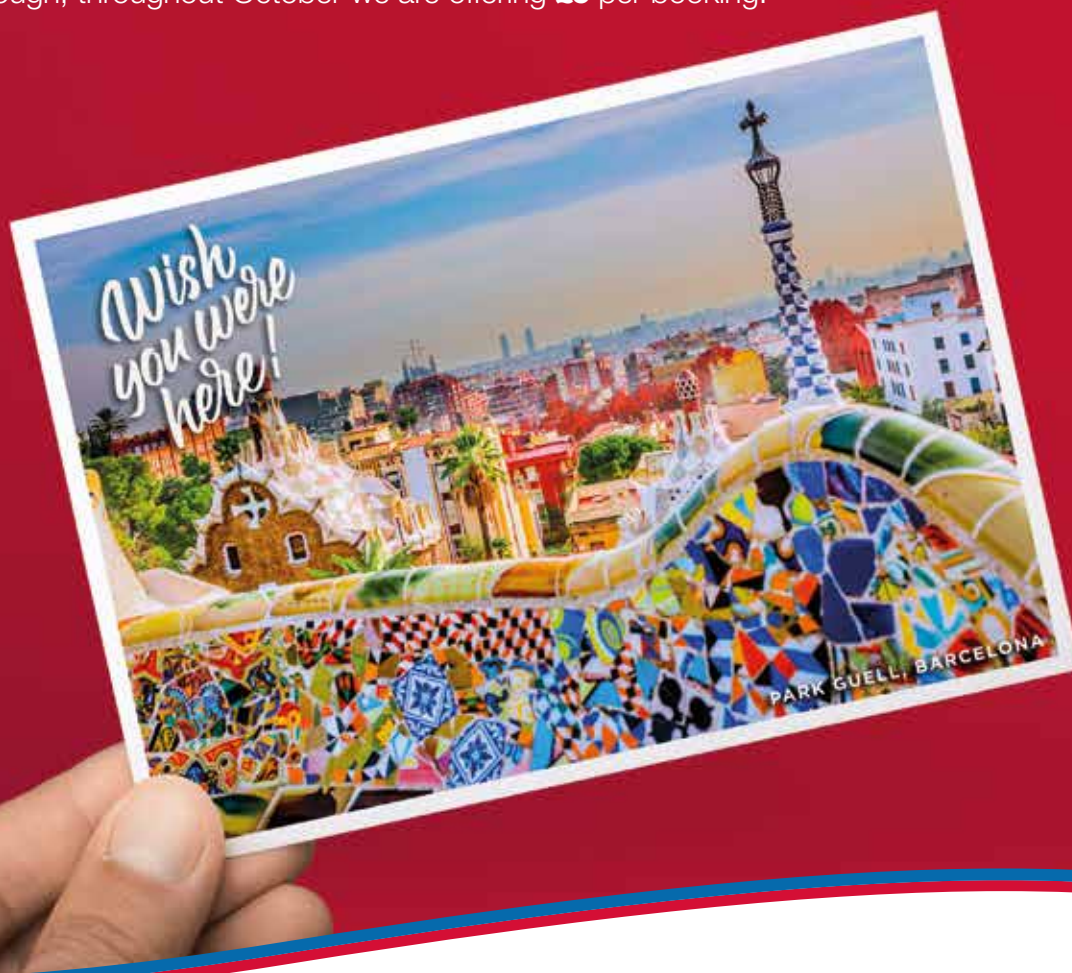
We chat to Vlad Saveliev, global purpose specialist at G Adventures



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If that wasn't enough, throughout October we are offering **£5** per booking.



Letter

Welcome to the October issue...



I am delighted to have taken over at the helm – no pun intended – of *Cruise Trade News*. I have been on, and written about, a number of cruises over the years and always very much enjoyed them: superlative service, amazing cuisine, entertainment on tap and fascinating places to explore. “What’s not to like?”, as they say.

In my debut issue of CTN we bring you all the latest updates and developments in the cruise market – from a round-up of six of the best foodie trips and reviews of the *Norwegian Bliss*, *Crystal Endeavor* and *Douro Splendour* ships to a look at Spanish river cruise itineraries and ideas for pre and post tours that include trekking in wildlife parks and train rides to exotic locations.

We also have some dedicated coverage of expedition voyages, reflecting the growing interest in that specialist sector, as well as of Antarctica, one of the biggest draws in terms of destinations to be explored on that particular type of cruise.

We’ve got the sales side of your business covered too, with the inside track on effective time management and how to reign supreme when selling adventure holidays, plus our pick of the best incentives for agents out there – including the chance to win a seven-night Mekong River cruise.

I very much look forward to getting out and about and meeting you, our readers, over the coming months.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colette Doyle'.

Colette Doyle
Editor
@cruisetradenews

NEW SHIPS

Spirit of Discovery to be christened in Dover

Saga has announced that the official naming ceremony for *Spirit of Discovery* will be held at the Port of Dover on 5 July 2019.

The 999-capacity ship – Saga's first ever new build – will be the first to be named at Dover following the £250m redevelopment of Dover Western Docks.

Spirit of Discovery's sold-out maiden voyage, A British First, will sail from the port on 10 July next year. Destinations throughout summer 2019 include Spain, Scandinavia and the Baltic, as well as a four-night mini-cruise to Holland, Germany and Belgium.

"As the place that Saga's first cruise ship set sail from more than 20 years ago, Dover was the natural choice," said Saga's chief operating officer, Nigel Blanks.

Sister ship, *Spirit of Adventure*, will join the fleet in August 2020. The line also recently announced a move to all-inclusive cruising from 2020.



NEW SHIPS



Nieuw Statendam completes sea trials

Nieuw Statendam, the newest ship from Holland America Line, has successfully completed two sets of sea trials.

The ship, the second Pinnacle-class vessel in the fleet, underwent tests on its systems, engines and machinery, before returning to Fincantieri's Marghera shipyard in Italy.

Due for delivery in December 2018, the 2,666-guest ship will explore the

Caribbean in winter and then move to northern Europe, Iceland and the Mediterranean in summer during its inaugural year.

Much of the design will be similar to *Koningsdam*, although *Nieuw Statendam* will have exclusive public spaces and its own style created by hospitality designer, Adam D. Tihany, and designer and architect, Bjørn Storbraaten.

INDUSTRY NEWS

Scenic bolsters its trade teams

Scenic has announced a number of new appointments to its trade sales and marketing teams.

Joseph Grimley of Riviera Travel joins as director of trade sales, as Dawn Quinn, Scenic UK's current head of trade sales, will be taking a sabbatical for 12 months. Grimley joins across the group portfolio of Scenic River Cruise, Scenic Eclipse, Scenic Land Tours and Emerald Waterways River and Ocean Cruises.

Scenic has also appointed Nicky Yates from Attraction World as northern agency sales manager, Scenic Group UK.

Meanwhile, Regit's Steven Morrow joins as digital marketing manager, to lead an in-house digital team of three, while Martin Solly comes in as brand manager for Scenic Eclipse.

Scenic has also added to its commercial team following the promotion of Rachael Shaw to global head of yield & revenue management. Chris Matthews is the new commercial manager. Kerry Weldon and Mohammad Patel have both been appointed as commercial analysts.

APPOINTMENTS



Cruise Scotland, the organisation which markets Scottish ports to the cruise industry, has appointed a new chair, **Robert Mason**, who is currently Forth Ports' head of cruise for Capital Cruising in Scotland. He said: "[The cruise] sector contributes almost £100m annually to the Scottish economy."



Michelle Tomlinson will take on the new role of cruise and partnership manager with Kuoni. Tomlinson will focus on building relationships with cruise lines.



Riviera Travel has appointed **Jim Forward** as its new commercial director. The appointment, which will take effect from 1 December 2018, will help the company strengthen growth opportunities.



Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings has announced the appointment of **Mark A. Kempa** as executive vice president and chief financial officer. Kempa, who had been the interim CFO since March 2018, will report to the company's CEO, Frank Del Rio.

INDUSTRY NEWS



The Danube: a river that leads the way

Record growth for river

In 2017, the UK river cruise market reached 210,400 passengers, an increase of 21 per cent, according to figures from CLIA UK & Ireland.

Total bed nights were also up, by 24 per cent, against 2016.

Andy Harmer, senior vice-president membership and CLIA UK & Ireland director, said: "With continued investment and innovation in this sector, and with new events and initiatives to engage the travel agent community, the growth in river cruising continues to be an important part of the overall cruise industry."

European river cruises, which account for almost 90 per cent of bookings, were the driving force behind the growth, specifically cruises on the Douro, Russian waterways, Rhine and Danube.

Meanwhile, cruises in central and western Europe accounted for almost two thirds (62 per cent) of all river cruise bookings, with the Rhine and Danube leading the way.

Eastern and southern Europe saw the most growth, predominantly on Russian waterways and on the Douro.

AWARDS

Shortlist announced for Cruise Stars Awards

The shortlist for the 2018 Cruise Stars Awards has now been announced.

The awards – organised by Real Response Media – shine a spotlight on the brightest and best talent in the cruise holiday sector, with a focus on the 'ones to watch' in the industry.

First conceived in 2016 as the Rising Stars Awards for under 35s, the success of previous years has led to the addition of new categories and a lifting of the age restriction.

Categories include sales, marketing and management, and this year the event recognises and rewards outstanding regional travel agents across the country.

Colette Doyle, editor of *Cruise Trade News*, said: "The Cruise Stars Awards pay tribute to all the hard-working agents who, day in, day out, are selling cruise to more people than ever before.

"They are a crucial part of why the industry



is booming and are helping to expand the reach of cruising."

Finalists will attend a prestigious lunchtime event at London's Grand Connaught Rooms on 16 November, with winners receiving industry-wide recognition, as well as the opportunity to be featured in *Cruise Trade News* during 2019.

For more information, visit www.cruisetradenews.com/cruise-stars-awards/

INDUSTRY NEWS

P&O targeting new-to-cruise

P&O Cruises is pushing hard to attract new-to-cruise customers as it prepares to fill *Iona*, according to the line's senior vice president.

Iona, which joins the fleet in 2020, will sail to the Norwegian Fjords for her inaugural season. It will be joined by a sister ship in 2022, representing an increase in capacity of 50 per cent.

Speaking at a trade event, Paul Ludlow, senior vice president, told of how scrapping the discretionary service charge and running itineraries of seven nights were steps to persuade people to try a cruise.

"This is a huge increase in capacity for P&O Cruises. *Iona* gives us a great opportunity to do new things and bring in new dining experiences. That duration [seven nights] gives people a chance to see if they like it and it's a great opportunity to try P&O for the first time.

"We know we have a loyal customer base, but we need to find new customers. It's about branching out and showing why a cruise with us is such great value.

"Our destinations appeal. The Norwegian Fjords, for example; that is a bucket-list destination for many people."



Paul Ludlow: "A great opportunity to do new things"



Get closer with Fred. Olsen

DESTINATIONS

Fred. Olsen unveils 'closer' cruising

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines has launched a new programme for 2019 that will immerse guests in their destinations.

'Closer' cruising applies to cruises aboard *Braemar* departing from Southampton.

Highlights of the programme include the 13-night Cruising to the Heart of the Baltic cruise, departing on 26 May 2019, with prices from £1,699pp; the eight-night Cruising the Fjords of Norway, departing on 14 August 2019, prices from £1,199pp; and the 13-night Cruising to the Heart of Seville & Bordeaux sailing, departing on 14 September 2019, with prices from £1,799pp.

All prices are based on two adults sharing a twin-bedded interior room, and include accommodation, all meals and entertainment on board, plus port taxes. Rigid inflatable boats (RIBs) are also expected to be installed on the *Braemar* by the end of this year.

DIGITAL

PONANT goes digital for agents

PONANT has created a Facebook group for agents in the UK and Ireland, in order to strengthen links with the trade industry.

The group, PONANT Experts UK & Ireland, will allow the cruise line to communicate directly with agents, sharing news about products, incentives, ship visits and events.

In addition, agents will be able to provide feedback and run monthly competitions.

Stephen Winter, international sales director for PONANT, said: "It shows our continued involvement and dedication to the UK and Irish markets, and our ambition to significantly grow our share of the market in the UK and Ireland."



PONANT: strengthening links

IN BRIEF

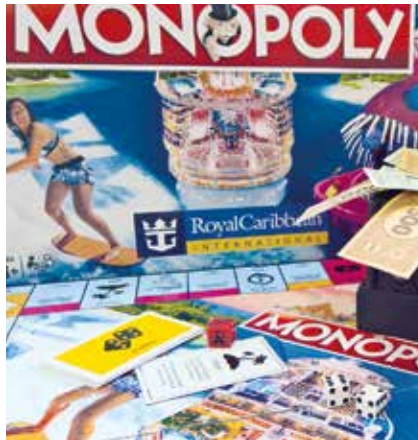
COMPETITION

Win limited edition Monopoly set

Cruise Trade News is giving agents the chance to win a Royal Caribbean Monopoly set. Just over 1,000 have been released, so this is the chance to be one of the lucky few in possession of this limited-edition collectible.

In this version of the classic board game you can own Cococay, collect an entire fleet of luxury cruise ships, or visit some of the world's foremost cruise destinations as a Top Hat.

Cruise Trade News will be releasing details of how to win on the website, social media channels and e-newsletter in the near future, so why not roll the dice, and take a chance? Good luck!



AWARDS

Get voting for next year's Wave Awards

The final shortlist for the public vote section of the Wave Awards 2019 has been revealed.

The awards – owned and organised by Real Response Media, the company behind the market-leading brands *Cruise Trade News* and *World of Cruising* – are the most prestigious accolades in the UK cruise sector.

Voting for the passenger favourites category has been underway since July and there is now a shortlist of 15 nominees for each category.

This is a chance for members of the public to place votes for their favourite cruise lines, travel agents, destinations and bloggers to decide the winners for 2019. Voters will be automatically entered into a free prize draw to win a luxury cruise for two with SeaDream Yacht Club, worth up to £8,000.

The winner can choose from an itinerary in the Caribbean or the Mediterranean to be taken during 2019.

Voting closes at midnight on 31 December and the top three in each category, with the winners drawn on 15



January 2019, will go on to the Wave Awards ceremony, held at the De Vere Grand Connaught Rooms in London on 7 March next year.

In addition, there are a host of judged categories, divided into five areas: Cruise Line; Ports and Destinations; On board; Industry; and Agent. Entry for these closes on 19th October.

Find out more information and cast your vote here: www.worldofcruising.co.uk/vote

WHO-Mercy agreement

Mercy Ships has signed an agreement with the World Health Organization to improve surgery and anaesthesia services in Africa. The organisations hope to increase access to surgical care and improve health services to strengthen health care delivery systems.

WHO regional director for Africa Dr Matshidiso Moeti said it would help bring "hope and healing on the African continent".

Helicopters on Eclipse

Scenic has taken delivery of two Airbus H130 helicopters, intended for the *Scenic Eclipse*, which is due to be launched in January. The helicopters will be carried on board, offering guests "unparalleled access to some of nature's most beautiful sites", according to Scenic founder and chairman, Glen Moroney. He added: "We have specifically selected this model for its wide, unobstructed cabin space which can accommodate the pilot and up to six passengers, with outstanding visibility for all passengers."

Wonders of the world

Crystal Cruises' ship, *Crystal Serenity*, will set sail on 5 January 2021 on a 139-night voyage from Miami to Dover. The company's 26th annual world cruise, entitled *Ancient Dynasties & World Wonders*, will follow a route that takes it through the Caribbean, Hawaiian Islands, South Pacific, Australia, Indonesia, Southeast Asia, the Far East, India, the UAE and the Mediterranean.

The last straw

Cruise and Maritime Voyages will no longer serve plastic straws as standard. The move aims to reduce the amount of plastic used on board. Guests will need to ask for a straw if they require one. Bob McGowan, CMV's head of customer services, said that "changing our habits is essential to keeping the environment free of unnecessary waste".

NEW SHIPS

Viking to launch new river ship

Viking has announced that it will launch a new vessel in 2019 in response to growing demand on one of its most popular river cruise itineraries.

Hosting 106 passengers, the ship – designed for Portugal's River of Gold itinerary – will be smaller than the original Viking Longships, while still including features such as the Aquavit Terrace and a wide variety of staterooms.

The cruise line has also opened bookings for 2020 sailings on the 10-day cruise, which includes an overnight hotel stay in Lisbon and a trip through the Douro Valley, for a starting price of £1,345pp. This includes all on-board meals and drinks, return flights from the UK and one shore excursion at each port.

Wendy Atkin-Smith, managing director Viking UK, said: "The popularity of the Portugal's River of Gold itinerary means many of our staterooms for 2018 and 2019 have already sold out.

"Now, with a brand-new ship and early release of our 2020 sailings, we're very excited to be able to give our guests more of what they love most."



REFURB

Azamara Pursuit christened in UK

Azamara Club Cruises' new vessel, *Azamara Pursuit*, has been officially christened in Southampton.

The 702-guest vessel, the third in the Azamara fleet, previously sailed with P&O Cruises as the *Adonia*, before undergoing an extensive refurbishment.



It features five restaurants, seven bars and lounges, and 62 on-board culinary experts.

Azamara's president and chief executive, Larry Pimentel, said: "*Pursuit* is a labour of love. Our guests appreciate the gift of travel, they are cultural connoisseurs and they have an explorer state of mind. We represent a world of wonder, and discovering something new is at our core."

Richard Fain, chairman and CEO of Royal Caribbean Cruises, also speaking during the ceremony, said: "Along with this ship, we get to celebrate the amazing men and women of Azamara. [We] now embark on a new chapter of growth, hope and discovery."

DIGITAL

#ChooseCruise to boost sales

CLIA's latest campaign, #ChooseCruise, is aiming to boost cruise sales through the months of September and October.

The initiative, which launches globally throughout October, replaces the Plan a Cruise Month campaign, which has been run by CLIA over the past two years.

CLIA member agents will be able to access an online toolkit to help them capitalise on the two-month promotion, which will include a marketing and PR guide, plus shareable videos and imagery for their social media campaigns.

Special #ChooseCruise promotions from CLIA cruise lines will also be accessible at cruiseexperts.org.

#CHOOSECRUISE

Edge-class expands with Apex

CELEBRITY APEX COMING TO THE UK

Celebrity Cruises has announced it will launch and christen the *Celebrity Apex* in Southampton in April 2020, with a series of voyages from the port to follow.

The ship is the second in the line's Edge-class.

It will be the first time Celebrity has operated two ships from Southampton, with *Celebrity Silhouette* returning for her third consecutive year.

The announcement came during a tour of *Celebrity Edge*, which launches later this year.

Lisa Lutoff-Perlo, president and CEO, Celebrity Cruises, said: "When *Celebrity Apex* launches in Southampton in 2020 it will be another incredible moment for our company and for the UK & Ireland market, especially as it will be ten years since we last named and operated a brand-new ship from the UK.

"In 2010, *Celebrity Eclipse* changed the face of UK cruising with our modern luxury approach. *Celebrity Apex* will continue our tradition of reimagining what is expected from all aspects of a holiday at sea and elevate modern luxury cruising in ways never seen before."

Jo Rzymowska, vice president and managing director, UK, Ireland and Asia, paid tribute to the work of the line's agent partners. She said: "The appetite from our agent partners for the Edge-class of ships has been simply phenomenal – it is no exaggeration to say it's been record-breaking."

Celebrity Apex will go on sale on 29 November 2018. A selling toolkit specific to the new ship and new itineraries will be available later in the year.



A sneak peek at the Magic Carpet



Living life on the Edge

EDGE 'ATTRACTING MORE NEW-TO-CRUISE'

Celebrity Edge is enticing more people to switch from land-based holidays to a cruise, according to Celebrity Cruises' vice president and managing director, UK, Ireland and Asia.

Speaking to *Cruise Trade News* at a tour of *Edge* at its shipyard in France, Jo Rzymowska spoke of her excitement at how the "unique and different" ship is gaining traction among potential new customers. "We're seeing that [interest from new-to-cruise]. We're working with our trade partners so they have what they need to switch people from a land-based holiday to *Celebrity Edge*," said Rzymowska.

"There's lot of things we do, thinking out of the box and working with partners to attract more new-to-cruise customers.

"We invest massively in the trade, as we need to give them all the tools they need to ensure they can sell Celebrity Cruises."

Edge, which sails its maiden voyage in November 2018, features a raft of innovative features, including the Magic Carpet, a platform which rises and falls on the side of the ship, as well as staterooms that include infinite balconies.

Rzymowska said that *Edge* has been designed "to give a feeling of space, lightness and brightness", adding, appropriately enough: "We're taking everything to the edge – and beyond."

Celebrity Edge: reaction



"This ship has blown me away and she definitely justifies the enormous hype. From the theatre concept of rotating platforms and staircases,

to the infinite verandas, the gorgeous restaurants, the innovative Grand Plaza, the multiple-level Eden, the double-deck windows on the port side of the Ocean View restaurant and, of course, the unforgettable Magic Carpet."

Robbie White head of cruise product, Travelbrands



"The ship is stunning – absolutely lovely. I think it's a game-changer and it's the attention to detail that stands out. The infinite balconies

are unbelievable. It's kind of brought a river cruise concept to an ocean ship.

There's a lot of space and the ceilings are high, so you don't feel as if you're on a ship. It's bringing a five-star hotel concept to the ship. If you can get new-to-cruise customers to see this, they'll see it's something a little different."

Anna Perrott head of cruise, Travelbag

INTERVIEW

Anna Perrott

Head of cruise at Travelbag

Anna talks about the agency's plans to give the company's retail outlets a stronger cruise focus, how video content across social media can grow the brand and what makes it stand out from the competition

What are your plans at Travelbag?

I'm a bit of a cruise geek, so I want to give everyone the cruise bug. For me, selling is all about passion and enthusiasm. I want to ensure all parts of the business are excited by cruise. It's about giving the team the tools and the knowledge they need to sell cruise, so we can go above and beyond others in the market. It's also about investing time in the staff and undertaking ship visits and training. We need to keep staff involved and give them access to information and updates on what's happening in the industry.

What attracted you to the role?

I wanted a new challenge. I had gotten to the stage in my career where I wanted to look at both online and retail, and Travelbag fits that perfectly. I like having the opportunity to look at all different parts of the business and so I love the fact that my role gives me the chance to be involved in marketing, commercial, product, sales and training – it's great to have a really varied role.

I absolutely love it. Every day is so different; one day I'll be working with a cruise line to secure a deal, the next I'll be helping out with events and local cruise marketing. It's very rewarding.

What was your previous role?

I worked in B2B, looking after cruise and commercial.

What's different in this role compared to your previous one?

There's a massive difference between



We're looking to improve the product mix from a land and cruise perspective, with bespoke packaging ”

B2B and B2C. Now it's about putting my retail hat on. It's very different, but I'm loving the challenge. While I know the cruise industry inside out, when you move roles it can be difficult initially, but I'm loving my new job.

What makes Travelbag different to others?

There's a lot of competition out in the market, but with Travelbag, because we offer such a broad range of holidays, and not just cruise, we're able to provide bespoke holidays that allow customers to combine a great land-based product with a cruise, giving clients the best of both worlds. With cruise not being the main element of the holiday, we're able to look at the trip experience as a whole. We offer cruise to people who aren't necessarily looking for one in the first instance. Touring is growing, so it's great we can combine those elements.

What plans do you have moving forward?

We have huge nationwide retail plans for our stores, including a revamp to give them more of a cruise focus and pique customer interest in this type of holiday from the moment customers walk through the door. We're also looking to improve the product mix from a land and cruise perspective, with bespoke

packaging. In addition, we're filming some unique video content to use across all our social media channels, which will give consumers an insight into the cruise holiday experience. Beyond this, we're also potentially looking at doing some TV advertising.

Is that something you have tried to push since you joined?

I'm probably one of the loudest voices at Travelbag, so these developments are all ones that I've wanted to put in place and luckily senior management are very good at listening to what we want to do.

What challenges do you see on the horizon?

It can be difficult with so much competition in the market, so we have to completely rethink the way we sell. Head of cruise is a new position at the company, so you do have to reinvent yourself as much as possible, but at the same time, strike a balance and be realistic in your growth plans. I want Travelbag to be known for cruise over the next 10, 20 years. It's an exciting time to be in cruise, but there is more we can do to attract additional new-to-cruise customers and generate interest from a different generation. There are so many new ships coming out, so we have to fill them.

Introducing Boutique Cruising aboard Spirit of Discovery

She's the only small ship being built for the British market. Launching Summer 2019, Spirit of Discovery's inaugural season is selling fast. And with such great value, it's not hard to see why.

Book now with Saga and your customers can try a boutique cruise from only £802 per person, backed by our Price Promise. Plus, we guarantee if they don't love their first cruise with us, we'll happily refund their money.

Call **FREE** on 0800 074 8021

or visit saga.co.uk/agents

Or call Agency sales **FREE**

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Saga Trade Team



Cruise with
no more than
999 other guests...

Every cabin has
a private balcony
as standard...

Enjoy a complimentary
chauffeur service
to the port...

Dine in five world-class
restaurants at
no extra charge...

Receive premium value,
with so much more
included in the price...



ABTA
110177879

Price is per person, based on two people sharing a Standard Balcony cabin aboard Spirit of Discovery's Rendezvous in Rouen cruise, departing February 12, 2020. Includes optional travel insurance underwritten by Great Lakes Insurance SE, UK Branch, and additional cancellation rights, or a price reduction of £18 if not required (cover is subject to medical questions). Private chauffeur service included up to 75 miles each way; shared chauffeur service from 76-250 miles each way. Please call for details. Saga's holidays and cruises are exclusively for the over 50s (but a travelling companion can be 40+). Saga Holidays is a trading name of ST&H Ltd (registration no. 2174052). ST&H Ltd and Saga Cruises Ltd (registration no. 3267858) are subsidiaries of ST&H Group Ltd (registration no. 0720588). All three companies are registered in England and Wales. Registered Office: Enbrook Park, Sandgate, Folkestone, Kent CT20 3SE. With respect to general insurance products sold in the UK, ST&H Ltd is an appointed representative of Saga Services Limited, registered in England and Wales (company no. 732602), which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. For more information about financial protection and the ATOL Certificate, visit www.atol.org.uk/ATOLCertificate. This is not a brochure, terms and conditions apply. NHA-SC0686.

Captain Stuart Horne

We sit down with Saga *Sapphire*'s captain to talk about loyalty, the environment and good old brand values



Our crew are the beating heart of what we do and this underlines how important they are to the Saga product. There is a unique relationship between staff and passengers – we see over and over again guests coming on board and the crew recognise them; they even have nicknames for one another. Many of them will be staying on *Sapphire*, but we will also need new crew to fill the gaps when some are deployed to the new ships. The crew all know if they're staying or transferring and when that will happen, as the rotations are in place.

Launching a new ship means a lot of training. Most of the staff from *Pearl II* will be going to the new ship, as well as some of the staff from *Sapphire*. It's quite a challenge and we're working on the strategy now. We'll be manning up the new ship properly from next April and will be starting the training process then.

We need more passengers as we will soon have more ships. We will be keeping our core values – the door-to-door service and the absolute care the crew give to passengers. It's the lifeblood

of what we do and we need to keep these in place. I talk about this in cocktail parties and always get a round of applause. My personal objective is to maintain what they recognise and are familiar with. There will be new passengers coming in and that is good for the business, as it allows fresh ideas and fresh connections. I tend to say you don't make friends for the holiday, you make friends for life. You see it time and time again and they often book cruises to be together from then on.



We always talk about like-minded people in the industry, but on Saga it truly is like that; our guests have fantastic stories to tell us and each other. Our core direction is to keep that friendliness and relaxed familiarity and it's important we get that across to those new guests coming on board.

Some of the scrutiny that cruise ships come under when it comes to the environment is probably ill-founded, but technology is improving, along with the way in which we handle our emissions, and the fuel we burn. We are governed by world authorities in terms of the types of fuel we are able to burn and purchase; there are LNG opportunities out there, but it's a very new and untried path and, as a smaller cruise company, we need to make sure we focus on a secure way of operating a ship.

But we're doing a lot in terms of incinerators, pulps for rubbish and working with the port authorities, and we're also making great efforts to reduce plastics on board. In a funny way, plastics in the oceans has become a bigger subject for the population than exhaust emissions. We need to be seen to be executing good policies in terms of ocean cleanliness and environmental protection. We have to be as clean as we possibly can be. ⚓

WORDS: REBECCA BARNES

“ There will be new passengers coming in and that is good for the business, as it allows fresh ideas and fresh connections ”

What's in it for you?

This month's star prizes, incentives and fam trip offers



Win tickets for 'Festival of Edge'

INCENTIVE

Celebrity Cruises is offering 200 agents the chance to experience the 'Festival of Edge', an exclusive two-night sailing on *Celebrity Edge* from Southampton on 13-15 May 2019. The offer is part of the line's Celebrity Moments campaign.

To book a place on board, agents need to make as many bookings as possible between 30 August and 14 November 2018 and register them on Celebrity Rewards – www.celebrityrewards.com.

To help agents, Celebrity Cruises has a range of incentives for guests on selected sailings, including a free classic drinks

package for two, worth over £690; savings of up to £600 per stateroom; flights to Europe from as little as £99pp; and 50 per cent savings and free soft drinks packages for third and fourth guests.

The cruise line has also added to its Celebrity Rewards programme by offering more points on higher inventory bookings.

Celebrity Cruises is providing its partners with marketing and point of sale materials for use in their own marketing. This will include a new selling guide featuring key itineraries, savings, extras and top selling tips for agents.

£100 voucher up for grabs

If you're wondering what to get friends and family this Christmas, then help is at hand with this generous prize from our friends at Regent Seven Seas Cruises. Book a new 2018 or 2019 sailing with Regent Seven Seas Cruises in October and the cruise line will reward you with a £100 Amazon e-voucher.

The incentive only covers new bookings made between 1 and 21 October inclusive. To claim their prize, agents should email the booking reference within seven days of confirmation (applicable monies received) to Regent Seven Seas Cruises' sales support team at: salesupport@rssc.com



INCENTIVE

Please note that claims received after 22 October will not be eligible. Options must be held within the incentive period, any options held prior to the incentive start date will not qualify and onboard bookings do not qualify either.

Following the claim, all bookings will be verified and an email sent to advise recipients. Bookings cannot be transferred between staff members and are not combinable with any other incentives. Terms and conditions apply.

Regent Seven Seas Cruises describes itself as "the world's most inclusive luxury experience", with a five-ship fleet that visits more than 450 destinations around the world. In early 2020, Regent will launch its brand-new vessel, Seven Seas Splendor.

APT's #ChooseCruise incentive

APT has unveiled a new incentive to coincide with CLIA UK & Ireland's latest campaign, #ChooseCruise, which aims to boost cruise sales.

Agents who book any APT Luxury or Essential Asia river cruise holiday could win a seven-night Mekong river cruise for two, including return economy flights.

The incentive covers bookings made from 1 September to 30 November. The closing date for entry is 7 December 2018. The winner – chosen at random in the week commencing 10 December 2018 – can choose any available category C cabin aboard *La Marguerite* from January to April 2019, or during July 2019.

To enter and access details on terms and conditions, agents need to register their bookings at www.APT-Experts.co.uk/incentive.

As well as flights, the prize includes transfers in Asia, meals and drinks on board, sightseeing, tipping and the services of a cruise director.

INCENTIVE



Expedition news

Silversea's festive cruises

Silversea has a selection of voyages over the holiday season this year, from Asia to Africa, and from Antarctica to the Caribbean.

Destinations range from the sacred shrines of the Far East to the Great Barrier Reef and Antarctica. The first of two expedition cruises in Antarctica is from the series of special voyages under the heading Silversea's Explorer's Collection.

Offered in partnership with London's Royal Geographical Society, this expedition will celebrate early explorers, as *Silver Explorer* follows Ernest Shackleton's Endurance expedition. Fares start from £17,900pp, round trip from Ushuaia 17 December 2018 - 4 January 2019.

The second visit to Antarctica will also depart round trip from Ushuaia, on 22 December. Fares for the 15-day trip start from £22,100pp.



OOE hosts researchers

Dive researchers on board with One Ocean Expeditions – which provides expedition cruises to the Antarctic and Arctic – recently completed a trip to the High Arctic.

The research, part of a partnership between One Ocean Expeditions and Ocean Wise, focuses on exploring underwater sites and documenting marine life.

The Ocean Wise Arctic dive team is the only one of its kind in Canada. Since 2015, the team has been conducting nearshore biodiversity surveys in Cambridge Bay, and is monitoring changes in the abundance of key taxonomic groups of fish, invertebrates and algae.

This year marks the first in which such surveys will be conducted at previously unexplored sites between Resolute Bay and Grise Fjord in the High Arctic.

SWOOP'S NEW CRUISE

Swoop Patagonia has launched a new four-day Chiloé & Pumalín Discovery: Wildlife & Fjords cruise in southern Chile, departing in January and February 2019.

The expedition, which is available exclusively in the UK through Swoop Patagonia, combines hiking in the rainforests of the Pumalín National Park with kayaking and fishing in the Chilean Lake District.

The price of US\$2,340pp is based on a group of eight people travelling, and includes private return transfers to Puerto Varas, a guide and daily on-board lectures, birdwatching equipment, insurance, entrance fees to parks and three nights' full board on *M/V Alba*.



PONANT and Nat Geo join forces

PONANT has announced a partnership with National Geographic Expeditions to offer a range of co-branded, luxury cruises.

Customers can choose from 130 itineraries designed for the next four years, with prices starting at £2,700pp.

National Geographic Partners (Europe & Africa) travel director, Nathan Philpot, said: "In PONANT, we have a luxury partner that has experience in traveling to ambitious locations, along with an expansive travel agent network, and call centres and websites in English, French and German. We will be offering premium experiences, with an ethically minded partner, to create itineraries that speak to the explorer in all of us."

PONANT's chief sales and marketing officer, Herve Bellaiche, said: "The partnership brings together two highly respected global companies with common values to inspire a new generation to live curiously, explore our planet and become ambassadors for sustainability."

FOCUS ON Antarctica

This stunning icy wilderness will wow passengers in search of something out of the ordinary



Get up close and personal with large colonies of penguins

You discuss...



"Antarctica is still one of the most remote places on earth and expedition cruising is the best way to explore this pristine wilderness. Passengers get the opportunity to get up close with the wildlife, including penguins and whales. One of the things you can do early in the season is camping in the open, or even skiing."

Craig Upshall, sales director UK/Europe, Aurora Expeditions



"We are seeing demand for Antarctica rapidly increasing and expedition cruising offers you the chance to explore this incredible destination and get up close to the unique environment. There are a number of new ships set to enter the market and Aurora's *Greg Mortimer* raises the bar with some fantastic new features."

Martin Johnson, director, Latin Routes

Spirit of Antarctica

Antarctic adventures are best enjoyed in midsummer, when near-midnight sun powers an explosion of life along the shore and brightens the thought of camping out, early alpine climbing starts, or extended kayaking trips. Penguin highways are busy with traffic as parents hurry to fatten chicks and waterways are alive with whales and seals. Passengers can visit historic sites and step onto the most spectacular continent on Earth.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Hone your ice and wildlife photography skills
- Hear humpbacks feeding
- Snuggle into the wonder of camping onshore in Antarctica
- Experience the thrill of Antarctic kayaking, climbing and ski-touring

When? 9-19 November 2019

Book: From £8,999 per person including flights from LHR, domestic flights AEP to USH, two nights' stay in Buenos Aires and transfers to and from the airport

Across the Antarctic Circle

Crossing the geographical milestone of the Antarctic Circle is a moment to celebrate. In this frozen area of extraordinary beauty, powerful orcas and leopard seals patrol the waters.

Meanwhile, ethereal snow petrels grace the skies against a backdrop of bristling mountain ranges and surreal icebergs. Threading its way through an intricate system of icy waterways, the ship heads for the glorious Crystal Sound at the mouth of The Gullet.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Delight in observing young penguins leaving the nest for the very first time
- Celebrate the momentous crossing of the Antarctic
- Circle at latitude 66°33' South
- Take a polar plunge and earn hero status from your shipmates

When? 3-15 Feb 2020

Book: From £10,799 per person; details as previously

Wild Antarctic

Welcome to the ice factory. Thanks to vast ice shelves that calve monstrous tabular icebergs, waters rich in krill and otherworldly landscapes, the Weddell Sea is one of Antarctica's most unique regions. Aurora's new expedition ship, *Greg Mortimer*, is ice-strengthened to take passengers comfortably between the Weddell Sea and the Antarctic Peninsula's west coast for the best of both worlds.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Search for feeding whales and hunting seals
- Get close to large colonies of penguins
- Marvel at enormous tabular icebergs in the Weddell Sea
- Guests can learn from a palaeontologist as they set foot upon incredible fossil-rich volcanic islands
- Fly to King George Island – cross the unforgettable Drake Passage

When? 3-15 March 2020

Book: From £9,999 per person



MSC MASTERS: BRAND NEW ONLINE TRAINING PLATFORM NOW AVAILABLE

Complete the training and be in with a chance of winning one of 2,000 places on-board
MSC Bellissima for the party of the year in Southampton on 3rd March 2019!

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Your Business

14 PAGES
OF INTERVIEWS,
SALES INCENTIVES
AND CAREER
INSPIRATION



At a glance: off the beaten track
with the *Greg Mortimer*



Win at selling:
time for an adventure

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Selling in style

Wendy Lahmich, director of sales at Holland America Line, talks about what is 'nieuw', so to speak, at HAL to help travel professionals sell the company's classic style and enrich passengers' journeys

What is the latest news from Holland America Line?

There's lots happening. We are certainly ending this year on a high as we launch *Nieuw Statendam* in December, a second Pinnacle-class ship, and sister to the highly acclaimed *Koningsdam*. The ship will offer Caribbean cruises over the winter – including a day at our award-winning private island Half Moon Cay – then sail from Amsterdam to Northern Europe during summer 2019.

What more can we expect from HAL in 2019?

For summer 2019 we have two ships sailing Mediterranean itineraries featuring long, immersive days ashore and overnights in cities such as Venice, Barcelona and Piraeus (Athens). Pinnacle-class *Koningsdam* will sail from Rome, while the smaller *Veendam* will offer cruises from Rome, Barcelona and Venice, since she's small enough to sail the Venetian lagoon. Some of our Eastern Mediterranean itineraries also overnight in Valletta (Malta) – and we are returning to Ephesus (Turkey).

We are offering more in-depth EXC voyages and experiences in Asia, Australasia and the South Pacific, where guests may explore through the prism of their own interests, via fascinating lectures, interactive workshops on board and excursions that bring their favourite pursuits to life. These include photography, nature and science, history and regional cuisine.

There are 17 Legendary Voyages of a 51-night duration, making it possible for



guests to delve deeper, learn something new and enjoy even more leisure time aboard a classically styled mid-sized ship, with itineraries including the Amazon Explorer, Voyage of the Vikings and Tales of the South Pacific.

What are you seeing in terms of current travel trends?

Guests are seeking more experiential, personalised travel experiences, hence the growth in our EXC product. For example, the 1,350-guest *Maasdam* will be cruising to some very remote islands and ports with a team of experts on board. The ship will be equipped with kayaks, so that guests can see marine habitats, bird life, remote villages and more up close.

There's also a huge interest in regional

cuisine. On board, we offer local dishes and culinary demonstrations at America's Test Kitchen. We are now taking this ashore with exclusive Food & Wine culinary tours, which are available on all ships and most itineraries and involve everything from the art of sandwich-making in Copenhagen to learning the secrets of Croatian winemaking.

What destinations are proving popular?

This year we've found that long-haul winter destinations such as Asia have been popular. We have the *Westerdam* sailing from Singapore, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Yokohama (Tokyo); plus we have our immersive South America and Panama Canal itineraries which, for the third year running, are proving to be good growth areas.

Alaska is a great way for travel agents to begin selling cruise, since the HAL cruise can be purchased as part of a cruise and stay package via one of our tour operator partners – and in this way Alaska really attracts a "new to cruise" audience, who are very likely to cruise again to a different destination.

Australia and New Zealand are showing significant growth for HAL year on year and the experiences on offer during the sailings are just phenomenal.

On a more personal note, what is your own favourite cruise destination?

It still has to be Alaska for its incredible scenery and wildlife. I will never forget the day spent cruising Glacier Bay



Wendy is headed to Sydney later this year to commemorate a milestone birthday

listening to icebergs “calving” and watching seals sunbathing. My own Alaska cruise was 16 years ago, and my son is now 15, so it’s not hard to work out another reason why Alaska is so special to me – he was nearly called Juneau after the capital city.

Finally, what’s new at HAL for travel professionals and what is new for you as we move into 2019?

We now have our biggest-ever UK sales team, with more office-based sales staff available to assist accounts who wish to



The team celebrates winning another award

grow their Holland America Line business, as well as our field sales business development managers.

Our PartnerSHIP portal at GoHAL.com is a great new resource centre for agents, full of collateral to help you sell, from promo toolkits to an image library and the chance to sign up to POLAR Online, our easy-to-book online system. We also really want to encourage travel agents to follow us on facebook.com/HALUKSales for all the latest product and team news. We are currently developing this tool further and will be announcing additional content and tools as we move through 2019.

There are new core courses on our online training module HALacademy.co.uk, which is the first step for any travel professional who would like to grow their premium cruise business. Most importantly, we really want to encourage more agents to learn about HAL, so please do contact us on salesupport@hollandamerica.co.uk so we can help you to grow your business.

On a personal level, I will be celebrating quite a big birthday in December this year, hence my trip to Australia. I have vowed to write a list of 50 things to do that I have never done before during my 50th year. ⚓



HAL’s award-winning private island, Half Moon Cay

ARTFULLY INSPIRED

Nieuw Statendam

Arriving December 2018

We're on countdown to *Nieuw Statendam*!

Did you know that HAL is 145 years old in 2018 - and what better way to celebrate than to introduce a beautiful new ship! Here are just a few facts you can tell your clients about *Nieuw Statendam*!

- *Nieuw Statendam* is second in our "Pinnacle-class", carrying 2,666 guests in spacious comfort - a 3rd ship arrives in 2021!
- The ship will boast an original art collection (around 2,000 pieces!) worth US\$4.1 million, including works by British artists
- As well as all the incredible dining venues on *Koningsdam*, we have a new Sushi bar with signature rolls featuring king crab, spicy tuna and yellowtail
- Our Pan-Asian restaurant Tamarind will feature a new al-fresco dining terrace
- More than 70% of the accommodation will be spacious verandah staterooms and luxurious suites. Plus ocean view family rooms with two bathrooms (for up to 5) and single staterooms
- In the Crow's Nest there's Explorations Central (EXC) showcasing indispensable travel resources and expert guidance that will connect guests even more to their destinations



Lido Pool Nieuw Statendam



Tamarind



Explorations Central

- Holland America Line is honoured to announce that philanthropist, film star and icon of TV Oprah Winfrey will be godmother of *Nieuw Statendam*.



Koningsdam Dining Room



Verandah Stateroom

Nieuw Statendam will head straight to the Caribbean for a winter season of warm-weather cruises, all visiting our award-winning island of Half Moon Cay. Then in spring 2019 the ship will homeport from Amsterdam, cruising to Norway, the Baltic and Iceland, then ending the summer in the Mediterranean.

Nieuw Statendam itineraries

Here are just a few of *Nieuw Statendam's* incredible itineraries:-

7-NIGHT CARIBBEAN

WESTERN CARIBBEAN:

30 Dec 2018; 6 Jan[^], 10, 24 Feb, 10, 24 Mar, 7 Apr 2019. [^]Itineraries may vary

Depart: FT LAUDERDALE **Arrive:** FT LAUDERDALE

Visits: Half Moon Cay, Falmouth (Jamaica), Grand Cayman, Cozumel (Mexico)

EASTERN CARIBBEAN:

23 Dec 2018; 13 Jan[^], 17 Feb; 3, 17[^], 31 Mar, 14 Apr 2019. [^]Itineraries may vary

Depart: FT LAUDERDALE **Arrive:** FT LAUDERDALE

Visits: Grand Turk, San Juan (Puerto Rico), St Thomas, Half Moon Cay



UNIQUE SELLING POINTS

- All cruises visit our private island Half Moon Cay
- Staterooms for families of up to 5 plus Club HAL activities for kids
- Perfect for couples, families and groups of friends

7-NIGHT NORWEGIAN FJORDS

VIKING SAGAS: 5 May, 2, 30 Jun, 28 Jul, 18 Aug 2019

Depart: AMSTERDAM **Arrive:** AMSTERDAM

Visits: Flam, cruising Sognefjord, Stavanger Kristiansand, cruising Oslofjord, Oslo

NORSE LEGENDS: 26 May, 23 Jun, 21 Jul, 8 Sep 2019

Depart: AMSTERDAM **Arrive:** AMSTERDAM

Visits: Eidfjord, cruising Hardangerfjord, Skjolden, cruising Sognefjord, Alesund, Bergen



UNIQUE SELLING POINTS

- Convenient sailings roundtrip Amsterdam
- The BEST way for your clients to visit Norway in terms of value and quality
- EXC in-depth destination experiences and advice

10-NIGHT MEDITERRANEAN

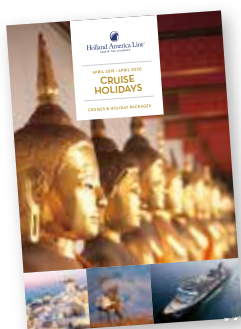
MEDITERRANEAN MOSAIC: 27 Sep, 17 Oct 2019

Depart: CIVITAVECCHIA (ROME) **Arrive:** CIVITAVECCHIA (ROME)

Visits: Dubrovnik (Croatia); Kotor (Montenegro); Kérkira (Corfu); Katákolon (Olympia, Greece); Piraeus (Athens); Santoríni; Naples (Italy)

UNIQUE SELLING POINTS

- Evening stay in Dubrovnik and Piraeus for more time ashore
- EXC in-depth destination experiences and advice
- Regional culinary experiences



THE 2019-20 WORLDWIDE CRUISE HOLIDAYS BROCHURE IS HERE!

Here are just a few of our brochure highlights:-

- Worldwide itineraries onboard 15 beautiful mid-sized ships
- The arrival of **Nieuw Statendam** featuring winter Caribbean and summer Northern Europe itineraries roundtrip from Amsterdam
- More **EXC In-Depth™ Voyages**, which explore fascinating corners of Asia, Australasia and the Pacific through the lens of your clients' own unique interests and passions
- New 17-51-night leisurely **Legendary Voyages**, which focus in depth on a certain area of the world with longer stays and overnights in key ports.

Agent Brochure Order Line: 08707 270 490

Order brochures through BP Tradegate at www.trade-gate.co.uk

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Day in the Life

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**Kelly
Calver**

**Trade account manager,
Avalon Waterways**

My alarm goes off at...

6am but since I'm an early bird, I'm always awake before that and looking forward to the day ahead. I don't eat breakfast (yes, I know I should) or drink tea or coffee, so it's get up, get ready and out on the road.

My job entails...

Supporting our agent partners and managing a portfolio of travel agent accounts and sales calls, delivering training, attending events/roadshows, hosting fam trips, and generally being on hand for any support needed.

I got my job...

Through a travel recruitment company who got in touch after seeing my LinkedIn profile. I applied, interviewed, and happily here I am two and a half years later. Before working for Avalon Waterways, I spent more than six years working in-house at a cruise line as a travel consultant and later as sales manager.



At lunchtime...

Usually it's a bite to eat in between agent visits. I try to avoid service stations as I can't resist a double cheeseburger. I do try to plan ahead and bring lunch with me at least a couple of days a week.

A typical day involves...

No day is the same, I could be waking up at home or anywhere across central



England ready for in-store training, a day of agent visits or commercial meetings. Alternatively, I might be travelling to a day or evening event.

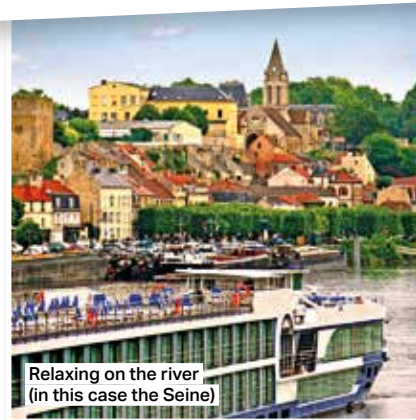
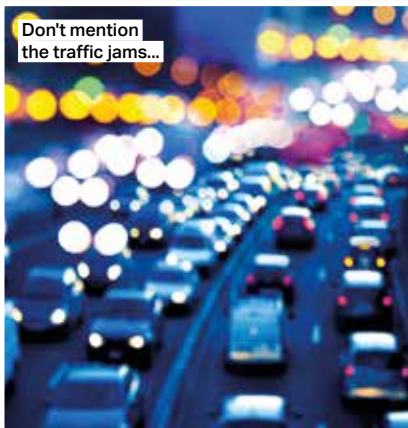
The most stressful part of my job is...

Traffic jams, road closures and not having any change for parking.

I love it when...

Travel agents get in touch to share their successes. This might be following a training session or event I've held and it could see them tell me about something

Don't mention
the traffic jams...



Relaxing on the river
(in this case the Seine)

they have shared on social media which has received a great response. This gives me great job satisfaction.

I'll never forget...

My first river cruise. I had no idea what to expect but it was the most relaxing way I have ever travelled: enjoying a cocktail on the top deck, calmly sailing through major cities and picturesque villages. Docking right in the heart of the destination and being able to just step off and explore. I loved it.



Yvonne Allen

Sales director, Ponders Travel

My alarm goes off at...

6.30am. I try to do some household chores before heading to my office around 8.15am.

My job entails...

Mostly cruise sales, including tailor-made packages, but pretty much all types of travel and helping out with the vast amount of group work at Ponders. I have also delivered staff training sessions and was a fundamental part of the streamlining of the business and strategic direction when I joined in 2016.

I got my job...

In November 2016, following a stint in NHS nurse management (my previous career) and running my own cruise travel business, Cruise Ahead. I had previously worked with Clare Dudley, owner of Ponders Travel. Working for a family-run business gives you a great sense of pride and loyalty.

A typical day involves...

Checking and answering emails and organising my diary (with a coffee), along with answering any calls. I also deal with



The never-ending admin pile

enquiries and catch up with booking administration, speaking to lots of lovely clients, past and present, and booking their dream holidays.

At lunchtime...

I try to take a break, and love to eat my lunch outdoors if it's warm and sunny. Unsurprisingly, frequent busy periods mean I often eat at my desk.

The most stressful part of my job is...

Not getting to the bottom of that never-ending pile of admin on my desk.

I love it when...

I get feedback from clients following their holiday. Knowing they have had a wonderful time gives you quite a warm, fuzzy feeling.

I'll never forget...

That the cruise industry is forever evolving and innovating, and we as travel agents need to adapt and change with it. The cruise market is still very small compared to the millions of overseas holidays taken every year.

We bring to the table...

Passion, enthusiasm, care, commitment, and energy, as well as a desire to ensure every one of our clients has their dream cruise holiday.

I'd shake up the industry by...

Getting cruise lines to put strategies in place to discourage agents discounting. There really is no need to discount. Customers then choose their agent based on service and everyone gets a bite of the full commission cherry. I'd also like to see better incentives for agents, especially with high-revenue bookings. ⚓



Commission: a bigger bite of the cherry?

Lunch al fresco anyone?



Q&A

JOHN WOOD-DOW

President of European Waterways



TELL US ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND AND HOW EUROPEAN WATERWAYS CAME ABOUT

Most of my career has been spent in the corporate world, with senior positions at Hilton and other multinationals, and I have only been involved in European Waterways in an executive role for the last few years. European Waterways was born 40 years ago as a self-drive boating business, moving upmarket into the new concept of hotel barging in the early 1980s. It has always been owned by my business partner Derek Banks, the original founder, and myself.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT THE HOTEL BARGING INDUSTRY?

The great thing about hotel barging is its flexibility as a product. You are looking after a maximum of 20 passengers and you can adapt the itinerary, menu and activities to meet client preferences in a way which would be impossible with larger groups, while always maintaining the highest levels of personal service.

HOW IS YOUR COMPANY DIFFERENT TO OTHER OPERATORS IN THE CRUISE INDUSTRY?

Hotel barging is at the other end of the cruise spectrum from the 3,000-passenger ocean liners. It appeals to cruisers who might prefer to be nearer land and to have the option to get off and walk – or bike – almost anywhere. The pace is much slower than ocean or river cruising, and the idea is to soak up the essence of the gastronomy and culture

of the region you are passing through. European Waterways was a pioneer of hotel barging and is now the largest operator, with unrivalled experience and choice of product and destination.

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

We are developing new destinations, such as the Champagne region of France (the name says it all), where we will be cruising for two months next year. We also have new tailored theme cruises such as the Royal Cruise on the River Thames, with privileged access to the castles, palaces and stately homes we cruise by and meeting the people who live there. In Italy, our opera cruise will take in a performance of Puccini's *Tosca* at the amazing Roman amphitheatre in Verona.

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

Burgundy is the heartland of France and of hotel barging. There is fabulous food and wine, pastoral landscapes and an abundance of history – all only a few hours from Paris, where we pick up our guests for our private transfers. Burgundy never disappoints.

“ In Italy, our opera cruise will take in a performance of Puccini's *Tosca* at the amazing Roman amphitheatre in Verona ”

CAN YOU GIVE US A DESCRIPTION OF A TYPICAL EUROPEAN WATERWAYS CUSTOMER?

A typical European Waterways client is discerning and well-travelled, enjoys good food and wine and the company of like-minded people. Half our business is groups who charter the whole barge, and a growing trend is for multi-generational families to cruise with us, as there is something for all ages on board.

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

My European Waterways partner Derek and I grew up as neighbours on the banks of the Thames, so boating is in our blood. When we are not barging for our work, we are sailing or boating for pleasure with family and friends.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FACING YOUR SALES?

Our biggest challenge is telling the world about our still little-known niche product. Hotel barging is growing fast but is still a tiny part of the cruise industry and most people have either not heard of it, or don't know what it is.

HOW DOES EUROPEAN WATERWAYS WORK WITH THE TRADE?

Over half our business comes through the travel trade. We pay healthy commissions and can offer product training via webinar plus an online reservation system, which allows our travel partners to block space and make bookings 24/7.

TOP THREE TIPS FOR AGENTS SELLING CRUISE...

1 Make sure that the client appreciates the value that the headline price represents. Unlike some cruise products, hotel barging really is all-inclusive. Everything except gratuities is in the cruise fare.

2 Guests enjoy an informal floating house party atmosphere. It's still cruising as you are afloat and not having to move from hotel to hotel every day, but some also see it as an alternative to a catered villa.

3 Get your clients thinking about the charter option. Can they put together a group of eight or 12 as a family – perhaps to celebrate a birthday – or as friends with a common interest they can pursue on board?

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Win at selling Adventure holidays

Latest industry research shows that adventure cruises represent a lucrative revenue stream that agents ignore at their peril, advises **Gavin Murray**, head of expedition sales at Exclusive Expeditions

A new survey conducted by Travel Leaders Group reveals a striking upsurge in adventure travel bookings, with many holidaymakers prepared to fork over a healthy sum of cash to get away somewhere that offers more than your bog-standard beach break.

Some 86 per cent of the adventure specialists surveyed have witnessed growth in their adventure travel sales in the past three years, making adventure travel a hot market to tap into. Once something embarked on mainly by the 20-something backpacker, today adventure travel appeals to both younger and older passengers, with those 40-plus also opting for adventure over the typical sun-and-sand holidays. With attractive benefits for all, travel agents cannot afford to ignore this \$683 billion-dollar industry with such a wide demographic.

It seems that, where some consider holidays to be a time for relaxation and copious amounts of sunshine, many are seeking something more meaningful. Hanging over the words 'adventure travel' is the allure and promise of something out of the ordinary. Adventure cruises, for example, can source experiences from remote and unfrequented locations, creating unique experiences replete with intrigue and exploration.

Adventure travel has the ability to lead travellers to all corners of the world, letting them brave the wilderness in Australia, learn to surf in Hawaii or immerse themselves in the multitude of different cultures in Africa. This type of travel delivers chances to overcome both mental and physical challenges. Through completing challenges such as trekking, kayaking and learning to fly a helicopter, travellers are left with a sense of accomplishment, something that regular run-of-the-mill holidays struggle to offer.

Adventure cruises have the capacity to go even further. Travellers taking buses



Travellers want
adventure on their
holidays



and planes face long, wearing journeys before their holiday even begins, but the time spent on board is an integral part of the adventure cruise. Cruises can present a special experience through providing enrichment programmes on deck. Exploration of a destination can be supplemented by informative lectures and seminars aboard the ship. All of this takes place alongside high levels of comfort and unparalleled views of the sea, allowing the traveller to bask in the wonders of the natural world while in transit.

Some noteworthy adventure travel destinations include the Galapagos Islands, a beautiful location harbouring species that cannot be found anywhere else. There are also many locations across Asia that provide adventurous and diverse itineraries, including the likes of China, Japan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam. If your clients prefer colder climates there's always the Arctic, where travellers can exercise their photographic skills as they soak up the glacial splendour and participate in activities such as canoeing and whale-watching.

Adventure travel offers fresh, rush-inducing experiences that promote personal growth. For many, the attraction of pools and hotels wanes when there are goals to be met, cultures to learn about and adventures to be had. Adventure travel is a lucrative industry which continues to grow and, given all it can offer, agents would be wise to promote adventurous excursions in order to increase cash flow. ⚓



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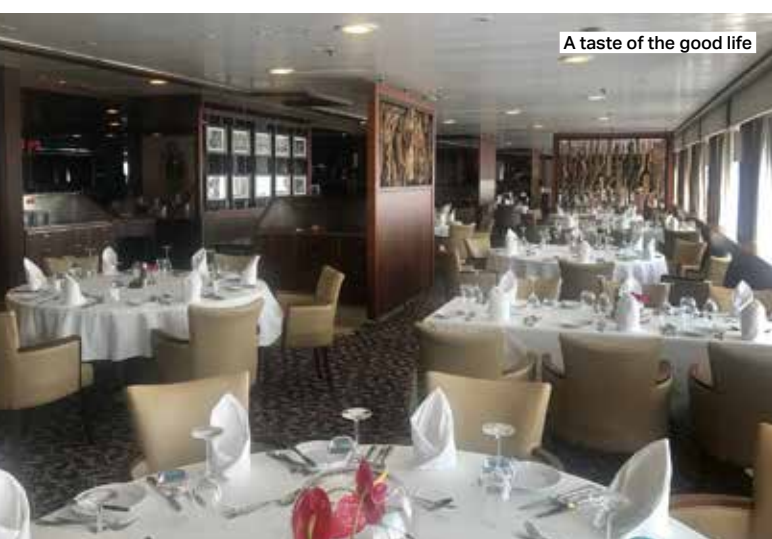
The pool deck on Saga Sapphire

SAGA SAPPHERE

In 2020, *Saga Sapphire* will retire from service – and we'll be sad to see her go. Elegant, refined and by no means fuddy-duddy, this well-loved boutique ship has some of the largest cabins at sea and a fabulous spa that is open to all guests. The food is exceptional and there are lots of cosy spaces in which to sit and relax. Remind clients that if they want to experience the flagship of the Saga fleet for themselves, the farewell cruise is scheduled for 6 May 2020.



Spacious cabins



A taste of the good life



Cooper's bar



Effective time management

Learn the best ways to manage time and get the job done

Time management is a popular ask in the training world. But let's start with a caveat: it's personal. Your own personal sense of time plays a big part in how well you manage that time. However, there are a few tips that can help.

It all starts with a commitment to change. The key to successful time management is planning and then protecting the time, which often involves reviewing your environment and the expectations of others.

You do something like this when you go on annual leave. You become very time and priority-focused, as you feel it's necessary to enjoy your break. However, it should be possible to be as well organised as this every day.

Top tips

- Try to minimise the time you spend taking unplanned phone calls/meetings, unless you are in a customer-facing, reactive role (customers can be internal too). You must plan time when you are not available, or you'll never get anything important done
- Think about how you spend your time. If you don't know, keep a time log and try to understand how long a task takes. Knowing exactly what you do – and what works well and what doesn't – is the first step to doing it more effectively
- Challenge anything that could be wasting time, particularly habitual tasks, meetings and reports where responsibility is inherited or handed down from above. Don't be a slave to a process or system – or social media, for that matter
- Use an activity planner for things you know need doing or responding to. This could be online or a manual to-do list. Ask yourself: is this going to save time or add to my burden?

- Manage your environment, including the expectations of others. This is a critical aspect of effective time management
- Challenge your own tendency to say yes without scrutinising the request. Start asking and probing what's involved to discover what the expectations are
- Do not start lots of jobs at the same time, as it's not the most efficient way of dealing with them
- Be firm and diplomatic in dealing with time allocated for meetings and paperwork. Provided you explain why you are managing your time in this way, people will generally understand and respect you for it
- Stop procrastinating. Set time management goals and review them
- Sharpen up decision-making

It's also useful to divide tasks into four categories:

- Urgent and important: This refers to dealing with critical issues as they arise and meeting significant commitments. Perform these duties now
- Important, but not urgent: These success-oriented tasks are critical to achieving goals. Plan to do these tasks next
- Urgent, but not important: These do not move you forward toward your goals. Postpone these
- Not urgent and not important: These trivial interruptions are a distraction, and should be avoided if possible. However, be careful not to mislabel things like time with family and breaks as not important.

Writing a to-do list is also a good way to remember what you need to do. However, you need to understand how long tasks can take. Otherwise you will be frustrated when you get to the end of the working day and the list is still full.



Debbie 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.

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Ship images are artists' impressions only and may vary



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Good Selling

Wendy Lahmich
Director of Sales, UK & Ireland



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PLUS

20-night African Nights & Indian Ocean Isles: Seabourn Sojourn – 5 March 2019. Cape Town-Dubai

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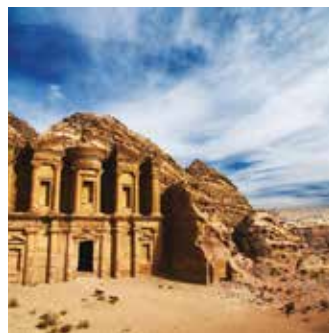
4-Night Denali Experience

Highlights: Flightseeing – Talkeetna to Anchorage • Full Day Tundra Wilderness Tour of Denali • Day at leisure to explore Denali • Domed rail from Anchorage to Denali

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20-night Arabia & Antiquities: Seabourn Ovation – 7 April 2019. Dubai-Piraeus (Athens)

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UNESCO Cambodia, Phnom Penh, the Temples of Angkor and Java – 15-night Seabourn Journey & Cruise
 22 APR 2019

10-night Gems of the Java Sea: Seabourn Encore – 12 Apr 2019. Bali to Singapore

Highlights: Discover the exotic treasures that await in the Indonesian Archipelago. Two ports on beautiful Bali, plus Komodo Dragons, towering volcanoes, a historic city plus Borobudur Temples.

PLUS

5-night UNESCO Cambodia, Phnom Penh & the Temples of Angkor

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The power of social

The influence of social media reaches far and wide, and the cruise industry is no exception

Life now takes places in a connected world, with instantaneous communication from – and to – just about anywhere.

That connection, the linking of people and ideas over vast continents and time zones, reaps untold benefits (and yes, sometimes disadvantages) for businesses of any ilk – and the people who work within them.

And the cruise industry is witnessing this change first-hand. Gone are the days where interaction with a potential customer was through a meeting or adverts in the local newspaper. Social media means agents can reach out to huge numbers at the click of a button, with a tailored message that is often part of a larger campaign complete with different posts to fit different audiences.

INFLUENCING PASSENGERS

Nick Wilkinson, Norwegian Cruise Line's managing director and vice president UK, Ireland & MEA, who works in the Gulf States and Israel, points to WhatsApp as one of the biggest players in this field. "You can see this [the move to social] changing in so many markets," he says. "People are advertising on WhatsApp, directly to the consumer – it's fascinating."

Wilkinson adds that a large portion of the change has come about in the last six months, adding: "If you had asked me 12 months ago if that was going to be the case [using WhatsApp to advertise], I would have said 'no chance'."

"The world is changing in how we

communicate. But communication is key, so we have to make sure we get it right and give our travel partners the tools and information to ensure they can be our ambassadors."

At the end of the day it boils down to influence. How do you influence someone to choose cruise over a land holiday? Take, for example, the work undertaken by Amadeus River Cruises in January 2018, when it announced a partnership with Zaven Global – a celebrity influencer company that focuses on experiential events – to promote 2019 sailings to the millennial generation. It stated it would host certain well-known people, who would then in turn promote and document the experience on their social media channels.

It could be argued that this type of campaign has more clout among the millennial generation. But does it?

A report by Accord Marketing, referencing figures from Deloitte, shows that 90 per cent of 55-64-year-olds – a prime cruise market – use the internet. However, according to an article on the Accord website: "Market research found that over 50s often feel as though digital marketing isn't aimed at them. This puts the ocean and river cruise sector in a great position to target this demographic directly... for digital this could mean including powerful imagery in video for display marketing, content marketing and across social media."

It adds: "Of course, with the rise of tablet and mobile phone usage people can now browse the internet virtually



In touch – anytime with anywhere

anywhere they please."

It's not a one-way relationship, however. "Platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram start a two-way conversation," explains Abbie Simmonite, a social media specialist at Bolsover Cruise Club.

"For us, it's a fantastic place to find out what cruisers think about their recent cruise adventures, the new ships about to sail, the latest destinations and so on."

THE 'HANDS-ON' AGE

As Simmonite explains, it is about being more "hands-on" with customers, so, she says, "we use social media to share photographs, videos and opinions from trips in real time".

This reaching out to people makes "the cruise community more visible", says Simmonite, dispelling any myths that cruising is only for the 'newlywed or almost dead'. "The industry is changing quickly, and social media's the perfect way to see what our customers think



Helen Smith, ROL Cruise:
social is "a great opportunity"

about these developments – the good, the bad and the ugly."

Helen Smith, marketing manager at ROL Cruise, says social has been particularly helpful with the new-to-cruise market.

"People searching for cruises like to visit our Facebook page to find tips, advice and any special offers that we may have," says Smith.

"It's also a great opportunity to reinforce our brand, letting our followers know how well we are doing and [that we] are a highly reliable company to book with. Much like with Feefo [a review platform], people tend to read more about a company before booking. Seeing us as a more communicable company puts us as a whole in a positive light and will provide our customer with the confidence

they need when booking a cruise holiday."

There's also a flip side to the social revolution – its role in how cruise lines interact with agents. While ship visits still lead the way as the most effective way of imparting knowledge to agents, there's no doubt online interactivity is fast approaching in the rear-view mirror.

BE CREATIVE

Nicola McNeish, head of sales at Celebrity Cruises, speaks of keeping people engaged and the need for creativity to be at the heart of how cruise lines works with agents. "We're trying to bring the experience [of cruising] to life," she explains. "Obviously, in an ideal world we would love to get everyone on board the ships, to see the product first-hand, but that's just not realistic."

Note, however, that it's not purely about using technology for technology's sake. She adds: "With any type of training, we try to stay clear of PowerPoint in order to make it as engaging as we can. The

"People searching for cruises like to visit our Facebook page to find tips, advice and any special offers that we may have"



Bernard Carter: getting totally connected with travel partners



A communications revolution at your fingertips

more you get people engaged in the product, the better.”

Driving engagement can also be seen at Oceania Cruises, which recently launched a new Travel Partnership Hub, which includes Recipe for Success, an online training hub consisting of seven modules, as well as rewards and marketing collateral.

“[This] gives us a totally connected way of communicating with our travel partners, not just those who we work with regularly, but also those who would like to sell Oceania but are not quite sure how,” says Bernard Carter, SVP and managing director at Oceania Cruises.

“What we can do, for example, through our Trade Facebook page and our various digital portals, is provide them with the tools they need to sell the product.”

Take, for example, the case in August when Oceania, fresh from its launch of the OceaniaNEXT programme – a series of enhancements to ships and other improvements to the passenger experience – held a series of 15-minute webinars with travel partners to communicate the ins and outs of the

project. The cruise line then uploaded one of these webinars to its Facebook Insider page for those who were unable to take part.

It may not seem all that revolutionary, but often simple things prove the most effective and rewarding. As for the Oceania hub, Carter says it’s a living organism that will evolve over time. “We’re looking at how we develop it further and how we keep it live, fresh and relevant. That’s the biggest thing for us.”

ONLINE TOOLKIT

CLIA is also in on the act, with its new #ChooseCruise campaign, running throughout September and October, which aims to boost cruise sales. This includes an online toolkit for agents that offers a marketing and PR guide and videos and imagery for social media purposes.

Simmonite sees such developments as welcome news. “There is so much happening with new campaigns, products, ships, technology and destinations arriving every day, and for our cruise experts social media is

invaluable in helping them keep pace in such a fast-changing sector.”

So, what changes might we see in the future? “While it’s difficult to predict how it is going to change,” says McNeish, “I would say the one thing that we are big advocates of is keeping the trade involved right from the outset. What do we do going forward? For me it’s about talking and maintaining close relationships.”

Learning is the name of the game for Simmonite. She contends that changes in the platforms mean that “what has worked one week, may not work another”.

She continues: “The future of social media is integrating it further into our other marketing and sales platforms, which will be interesting because we don’t want to move away from our successful personalised approach. But we recognise that for some customers, using social media to talk is more personalised – it’s what they prefer.”

As for Smith: “We believe that social platforms will steer in the same direction as ‘We chat’ – which is a multi-platform social site that basically combines social media, multi-purpose messaging (like Whatsapp), games and can even be used as a mobile payment app.

“Who knows?” she adds. “In the future you may be able to book a holiday all from one platform.”

WORDS: GARY PETERS

“What we can do, for example, through our trade Facebook page and our various digital portals, is provide them with the tools they need to sell the product.”

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Your World



Sable Island: a Canadian-protected
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Why not see Spain by river?

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A man with a beard is shown from the side, holding a smartphone to take a photo of a plate of food on a table. The table is set with white plates, cutlery, and a glass. A digital overlay on the phone's screen shows a virtual chef and a digital representation of the food on the plate. The background is a blurred view of the ocean.

6 of the best... Foodie cruises

CRUISING ISN'T JUST ABOUT VISITING AWE-INSPIRING DESTINATIONS – CULINARY EXPERIENCES ARE NOW BECOMING MORE IMPORTANT. HERE ARE SIX OF THE BEST TO TICKLE YOUR TASTE BUDS

LE PETIT CHEF

Celebrity Edge, the newest ship in the **Celebrity Cruises** fleet, is the first of four in the new Edge Class, and launches later this year. While much attention has been focused on its 'Magic Carpet' feature – a cantilevered, floating platform jutting out of the side of the ship that can be moved up and down for a whole new cruising experience – one of the most innovative features is Le Petit Chef. Celebrity has worked with technology firms to create an immersive, digital chef – and representation of the meal – that appears on the table top. Guests also have a huge range of dining options, with 29 restaurants, cafés, bars, and lounges to choose from.

THE MASTER CHEF

It's a bold claim: the finest food at sea. **Oceania Cruises** has, however, consistently backed up the statement with its on-board offering and themed cruises. Master Chef Jacques Pépin has been the cruise line's executive culinary director since 2003, and has inspired its award-winning culinary programme. Guests can join the Jacques Pépin Cruise, from Amsterdam to Lisbon, on 17 September 2019, for a 12-day voyage on the Marina. Highlights include specially designed menus, lectures and culinary demonstrations. Prices start at £2,889pp.



Mary Berry: the queen of baking is back



Luke Nguyen: demonstrations in different destinations

Le Petit Chef: virtual (and real) dining



Silversea: culinary enrichment at sea and on land

READY, STEADY, BAKE

The Great British Bake Off has been one of the hit TV shows of recent times, even defying pessimistic predictions that it would flop after its much talked-about channel hop and the loss of one of its brightest stars – Mary Berry. Fans will be delighted to hear that the queen of baking has not put down her baking tools. This Christmas she will be on board with **Emerald Waterways** for a Christmas market cruise. The eight-day Festive Delights of the Danube itinerary, departing Nuremberg 1 December on the Emerald Destiny, includes afternoon tea and an informal Q&A session with Berry, as well as a gala Christmas dinner. Prices start from £1,795, including return travel from London, Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow and Edinburgh.

THE NGUYEN EXPERIENCE

Chef and TV personality Luke Nguyen will be on board for three **APT** gourmet-themed river cruises in 2019. Nguyen, a Vietnamese-Australian chef, will join guests for cooking demonstrations and a range of immersive food experiences in different destinations. The 16-day Vietnam and Mekong Cruise, sailing the Mekong River to Siem Reap, departs 28 November 2019 from Ho Chi Minh City, with prices from £5,995pp, twin share. New for 2019 is the 18-day Hidden Wonders of Myanmar river cruise, priced from £6,795pp, twin share, while the third and final Nguyen cruise is the 11-day Grand Bordeaux itinerary, from Paris to Bordeaux, departing 26 August 2019 and priced at £5,395pp, twin share.

DINING IN COLLABORATION

Windstar Cruises has teamed up with the James Beard Foundation, a non-profit culinary arts organisation, to offer a series of themed cruises that include a hosted dinner with a James Beard Foundation chef and beverage expert, cooking demonstrations, shopping at the local market with the chef, and wine, spirits, or beer tastings. For example, the Islands Surf and Sunset itinerary, round trip to San Juan, sails with chef Jose Mendin, who has a range of restaurants in Miami. The cruise departs 15 December 2018, with prices from \$1,499pp.

CULINARY ENRICHMENT

Silversea has a range of itineraries dedicated to food as part of its culinary enrichment programme. These cruises feature discussions with on-board chefs, and market excursions, as well as demonstrations. Special meals paying homage to a region are also part of the package. An example is the Silver Shadow departure on 26 April 2019 for a 15-day Africa and Indian Ocean voyage from Dubai to Athens. Prices start at £3,780 with early booking bonus. ⚓

Tip of the iceberg

From spectacular scenery, remote archipelagos and breathtaking glaciers to polar bears, tight-knit communities and age-old traditions, a Canada or Arctic Circle cruise has plenty to offer



Baffin Island:
Canada's largest island

New for 2019, Tauck Small Ship Cruising has added a seven-night expedition voyage north of Norway into the wildlife capital of the Arctic, exploring a remote archipelago of glaciers, fjords and ice floes as part of an overall 10-day tour.

On board *Le Boreal*, passengers go where the weather and wildlife lead, seeking out tiny Svalbard reindeer, walrus colonies, whales, Arctic foxes and puffins.

A wildlife filmmaker from BBC Earth is among experts on the cruise, sharing fascinating insights into this untapped world far above the Arctic Circle – the closest most of us get to the North Pole.

While the region is undoubtedly niche, there are plenty of selling points for UK cruisers, according to polar travel specialist Chimu Adventures.

Co-founder Greg Carter said: "The Arctic is a great option for British cruisers because it offers an amazing polar

experience without having to travel as far – or incur the same expenses – as Ushuaia in Argentina to board a ship to the Antarctic."

It is also a good choice for those who suffer from seasickness; Arctic waters are much calmer than those in the Antarctic. The relative proximity to the UK and price point and the incredible wildlife and scenery are also big draws for the Arctic and will help agents sell the destination."

CANADA AND BEYOND

One Ocean Expeditions, a privately owned Canadian small-ship cruising company, offers unusual itineraries in the Canadian Arctic and Atlantic Canada and has a new ship, RCGS *Resolute*, joining the fleet next year.

The cruise line's marketing and business development executive Vicky Dowdeswell said: "This is a unique region.



SELLING TIPS

1

Sell the Arctic Circle's relative close proximity to the UK and the fact it's easier to reach than Antarctica

2

Wildlife is the big attraction here, with polar bears, whales, seals, walruses, reindeer and many birds

3

A Canada - or Alaska - cruise can be combined with a stay in the US or Vancouver

4

Summer is the main season for Arctic cruises, when 24-hour-daylight creates the Land of the Midnight Sun

5

As much of this region is relatively uncharted territory, agents should read up about the destination, then pass on top tips to clients and tailor the holiday to what they really want to see and do



Sable Island: a protected National Park Reserve

The Arctic: home to the majestic polar bear

Within the Arctic Circle, the High Canadian Arctic is home to extraordinary wildlife, from the majestic polar bear to the muskox, beluga whale and the elusive narwhal. It also has the fascinating history of early polar exploration and incredible cultural heritage of the Inuit that live there.

"As one of the last great wilderness regions on the planet, the glaciated scenery, soaring mountains and deep fjords of Baffin Island make it a haven for guests looking for a truly outstanding expedition."

Operator Frontier Canada sells One Ocean Expeditions product in the UK, as well as offering small wildlife cruises in the Great Bear Rainforest in British Columbia and Haida Gwaii, an archipelago off British Columbia's west coast, also known as the Queen Charlotte Islands.

Frontier Canada product and marketing manager Julie Thompson said: "Atlantic Canada has grown in popularity

with our clients over the last few years, especially as other parts of Canada get busier and people want to see more of this vast country.

"Focusing on incredible wildlife viewing experiences such as the wild horses on Sable Island and golfing on some amazing courses makes it a very interesting product to sell."

GATEWAY TO ALASKA

Canada, of course, is also the gateway for Alaska, which can only really be experienced by cruise ship.

Crystal Cruises' senior sales and marketing manager Elaine Gillard said: "Alaska is always a popular choice for UK passengers and is a great selling opportunity for agents, as a cruise gives guests the view from the water. It's the perfect destination to package together a cruise with a land stay or rail journey in Canada."



The cultural heritage of Canada's Inuit people is a real draw for visitors

TAUCKING POINT

Tauk Small Ship Cruising's 10-day Spitsbergen Arctic trip includes a seven-night cruise into the Arctic Circle.

Passengers meet in Oslo, then fly to Spitsbergen to join Le Boreal. The itinerary is flexible, although passengers can expect to see plenty of wildlife and perhaps the blue-tinted Monaco Glacier. There is only one trip planned in 2019 and prices start from £7,580pp, departing 24 June 2019.

tauck.com

MIDNIGHT SUN

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines has a 13-night Crossing the Arctic round trip out of Liverpool on Black Watch on 7 June 2019, calling at Trondheim, Leknes, Tromsø, Honningsvåg, Alta and Kristiansund, taking in the untamed scenes of the Lofoten Islands and the North Cape plateau, with the chance to marvel at the majestic Torghatten and Seven Sisters Mountains. Prices start at £1,749pp.

fredolsencruises.com

POLES APART

Adventure travel specialist Wildfoot Travel takes keen photographers as far north as possible on a 13-night North Pole Adventure. The trip includes setting foot on the North Pole and visiting the remote Franz Josef Land archipelago to spot polar bears and other wildlife, with photography workshops and lectures along the way. From £22,700pp, disembarking on 23 June 2019.

wildfoottravel.com

GO NORTH

Chimu Adventures has an eight-day Arctic Unveiled charter cruise on board Ocean Atlantic, departing on 23 June 2019. The starting point is Longyearbyen, the northernmost city in the world, reached via Oslo, then exploring Spitsbergen. Passengers can expect to see bearded seals, walruses, the Arctic fox, pink-footed geese and polar bears. Cruise-only prices start at £2,927pp.

chimuadventures.com

The East Coast of Canada



PUTTING TIME

Frontier Canada sells a seven-night Atlantic Canada cruise for golfers, called Fiddles and Sticks. Operated by One Ocean Expeditions, it offers golfers the opportunity to play some of Canada's finest courses. Passengers embark One Ocean Navigator or Akademik Ioffe at Louisbourg, Nova Scotia, with ports of call including Inverness and Sable Island. From £4,575pp, excluding flights, on 3 July 2019.

frontier-canada.co.uk

CANADA CARNIVAL

Carnival Cruise Line has a seven-day Glacier Bay cruise on Carnival Legend around Alaska, embarking at Vancouver Bay in Canada and disembarking in Seattle, on several dates in 2019. The cruise also calls at Juneau, Skagway and Ketchikan. Prices start at £719pp on 29 April 2019. Legend also calls at the Canadian port of Victoria on a seven-day round-trip from Seattle on 14 May 2019.

carnival.com

USE YOUR INUIT-ITION

Aurora Expeditions' 21-day Inuit Arctic and Beyond voyage starts in Reykjavik, Iceland and crosses over to Greenland's Prince Christian Sound. It then travels down the eastern Canadian coast, visiting Inuit communities, before disembarking in St John's. The cruise is on new vessel Greg Mortimer, on 23 September 2020, from £8,470pp, including pre-cruise accommodation, but not including flights.

auroraexpeditions.com

ON TRACK

Guests combine a cruise with a rail tour through Canada on Great Rail Journeys' 15-day Rockies and Premium Alaska Cruise. A seven-night Rocky Mountaineer tour takes in Emerald Lake in Yoho National Park, then Athabasca Falls in Jasper National Park, before arriving at Vancouver, gateway for the Alaska cruise, taking in Glacier Bay and Ketchikan. From £4,395pp, excluding flights, in May, July and September 2019.

Greatrail.com ⚓



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Seville: a joy to explore on foot



SALES TIPS

- An unusual and lesser-known destination that will appeal to seasoned river cruise clients
- A unique combination of a city break, and river and ocean sailing
- Flexible excursion programme with the option to purchase additional shore tours
- Excellent value for money, with all drinks - excluding a small number of premium brands - included
- Choice of cruise-only and fly-cruise options

The 176-passenger
La Belle de Cadix



Spain has long been the UK's most popular short-haul holiday destination, yet it isn't the first country that springs to mind when you think about river cruising. However, for agents in the know, it offers a one-of-a-kind waterborne experience.

The 408-mile Guadalquivir, which rises in the Cazorla Mountains, is Spain's second-longest waterway and the country's only navigable river. During the golden age of seafaring, this river saw the great mariners Christopher Columbus and Ferdinand Magellan, set sail for, respectively, the Americas and the first circumnavigation of the world.

Today, CroisiEurope is the one line to offer cruises along the 50-mile downstream stretch of the Guadalquivir from Seville, which is now the only section that can be negotiated by boats due to narrow channels further upstream. Its 176-passenger ship, *La Belle de Cadix*, is also unusual as the sturdy dual-purpose vessel can sail on both the river and sea. On a seven-night round-trip itinerary, it enters the Atlantic at Cadiz and sails for 18 miles along the coast before taking in a stretch of Guadiana, the narrow river that separates Spain and Portugal, and then returning to Seville.

LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

John Fair, CroisiEurope's UK director of sales, said: "Our Guadalquivir and Guadiana cruises visit some of the most renowned sites in southern Spain and offer something very different for those cruisers who have done the more mainstream itineraries. Combining river and sea, the cruises travel to the heart of Andalusia, allowing guests to experience the region's cultural heritage, delicious food and beautiful scenery. The itineraries are perfect for

travel agents to switch sell to clients who usually take city breaks as they include visits to Seville, Jerez, Cadiz and Granada."

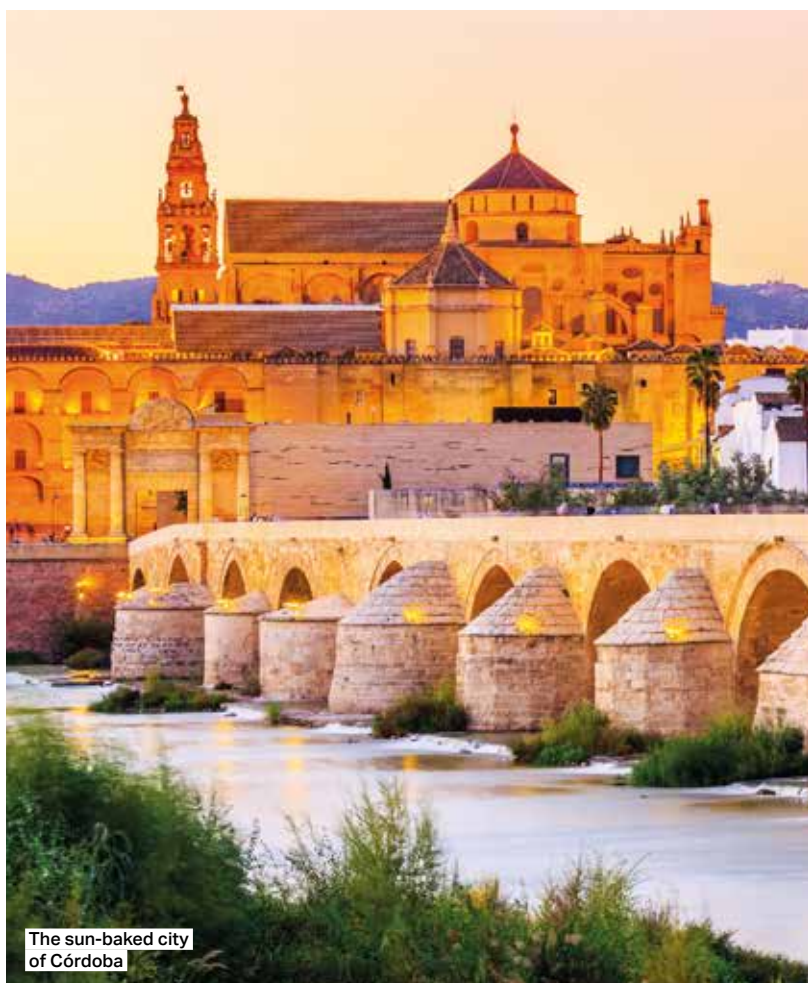
Indeed, the itinerary includes three nights moored in Seville, providing ample time for independent passengers to explore individually or opt for one of CroisiEurope's excursions such as a walking tour taking in highlights including the vast Gothic cathedral and labyrinth of streets in the former Jewish Quarter, or an evening flamenco show in the birthplace of the fiery dance. From Seville, there are also coach tours to the sun-baked city of Cordoba, dominated by the grand La Mezquita mosque, and Granada to visit the landmark Alhambra Palace.

Once underway, the cruise provides more atmospheric experiences such as a trip to a grand hacienda on one of the rice-growing estates lining the Guadalquivir to watch a dressage display by magnificent Andalusian horses combined with flamenco dancing. In charming El Puerto de Santa Maria, passengers can visit the cathedral-like cellars of the Osborne winery for a sherry tasting.

A natural highlight is Donana National Park, a former royal hunting ground that's now a safe haven for thousands of migratory and resident birds nesting in the dunes and wetlands, most notably storks that can be seen close up on giant nests of up to 5ft in diameter.

CHOICE OF OPERATORS

In addition to booking through CroisiEurope, the cruise is sold through a number of operators, providing agents with the opportunity to offer different packages suited to the client, such as Saga with its home pick-up service and included travel insurance for over-50s. >



The sun-baked city of Córdoba



La Belle de Cadix: graceful and elegant



A magnificent dressage display

Other companies include Shearings Holidays, whose product and yield director, Matthew Herbert, commented: "Seasoned river cruise customers who have sailed the main rivers such as the Rhine and Danube may be looking for something a little different from their next cruise. This region will appeal to those with a love of food, wine and culture. This holiday also includes two full days in Seville at the end, so agents should consider promoting it to their city break customers.

"We also include two excursions on this cruise so customers can enjoy even more while away. These are Isla Minima, with a visit to a genuine Andalusian hacienda followed by an equestrian show and a full day to Granada, including lunch."

Back on board *La Belle de Cadix*, passengers enjoy meals showcasing regional specialties such as Serrano ham, paella and local cheeses served with an excellent choice of nine complimentary wines.

DIP INTO THE DOURO

It is important to tell clients that the sailing time and distances covered on this culture-rich itinerary are shorter than other European river cruises. Also, *La Belle de Cadix* can only sail in gentle conditions. If waves reach a certain height, the seagoing itinerary will not take place

SELL IT

CROISIEUROPE
offers a five-night Andalusian Christmas round-trip Seville itinerary, departing 22 December 2019, from £700 cruise-only.
0208 328 1281
croisieurope.co.uk

SHEARINGS
offers the seven-night Treasures of Andalusia round-trip Seville cruise from £1,549pp on selected dates between May and September 2019, including flights.
0844 824 6359
shearingsagent.com

SAGA
offers the seven-night round-trip Gems of Andalusia cruise from Seville, departing 13 June 2019, from £1,749 including flights, home pick-up service and travel insurance.
0800 074 8021
travel.saga.co.uk

and the Guadiana section, with a visit to the Portuguese riverside village of Alcoutim, will be missed. However, all Spanish excursions will continue as usual by coach.

Another way for river cruise customers to get a taste of Spain is to dip into it from the opposite end of the country with a cruise along the Douro. Although this river is in Portugal, all sailings follow a similar round-trip route from Porto to the north-western Spanish border, with the opportunity to embark on a day excursion to the 'golden city' of Salamanca. All the main lines offer Douro cruises, and AmaWaterways, CroisiEurope and Riviera are debuting new ships for 2019. APT also offers a cruise with an overnight stay in Madrid.

Whichever way you approach it, a Spanish river cruise will offer your clients a wealth of new sights and experiences on a modern-day voyage of discovery. ⚓



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*Meet me in
Port Royal Jamaica
in 2019*

Captain Henry Morgan





A West Coast adventure on big-hitting Bliss

An industry game-changer – and Seattle's newest arrival – Norwegian Bliss is a joy to sail on, as Rebecca Barnes discovers

Standing on my stateroom balcony, binoculars in hand, about 50 miles south of Victoria, British Columbia, I swear I see the odd spray of water, suggesting there are whales in the area – between May and October there is, after all, a 95 per cent chance of spotting resident Orca pods.

I stand rooted to the spot for a good 45 minutes but no fins emerge from the ocean. But I soon get over the fact that the marine mammals are keeping a low profile, as I realise there's plenty more excitement to be had on the ship.

I'm sailing from the iconic American city of Seattle on new sensation Norwegian Bliss, the largest cruise ship homeported on the US West Coast.

Built in 2018 and with 4,004

passengers, 1,716 crew and 20 decks, this is no small sailor – the day before we set off for Victoria, the Breakaway Plus Class ship had made history as the largest to be christened in Seattle. It's also Norwegian Cruise Line's largest ship and boasts first-class facilities.

Back to the thrills and spills and, unless you've been hiding under a rock, you'll probably have heard about one of Bliss's star features – the two-level Go Kart racetrack, the largest at sea. Located on deck 19, there is an additional charge to race but I can confirm it's a great deal of fun – how many times have you burned rubber round a hairpin bend with the ocean right in front of you?

The adrenaline rushes keep on coming with a laser tag attraction and multi-level

water slides in the Aqua Park, one of which extends over the edge of the ship – it's a veritable playground for both big and small kids.

Inside things are no less impressive; everything looks pristine, contemporary and chic. Located at the front of the ship, the panoramic Observation Lounge was one of my favourite places in which to sit with a drink in hand and watch the ship chart its course.

678 Ocean Place is where to head for food, drinks, shopping and fun. Spread over three decks, and the hub of the ship, it's also a social place in which to meet new or old friends. Retail brands in attendance include Ray Ban, Tory Burch, Swarovski, Tag Heuer, Mont Blanc and many more. >



The Bliss racetrack



Relaxing options abound on board



Great views to be had from the observation lounge



Bliss has an array of suites available

Another great meeting spot for when the weather is fine – and exclusive to Breakaway and Breakaway Plus Class ships – The Waterfront is a quarter-mile outdoor promenade to enhance guests' connection to the ocean with a variety of dining, bar and lounge spaces.

But when the night draws to a close, you want all those creature comforts that you're used to. More than 50 per cent of the accommodation is taken up by balcony staterooms – these are decorated in calming shades of deep blue, brown and beige, with floor-to-ceiling glass doors leading outside. My queen-size bed was super-comfy (this is also able to convert to two beds), the bathroom clean and functional. There's also a sofa and a coffee maker.

Other accommodation options include studios which are specially designed and priced for solo travellers, spa suites with

SELLING SEATTLE

Seattle is a great base for a cruise-and-stay holiday before sailing to Alaska, 'The Last Frontier'. The walkable city, home to household names including Microsoft, Boeing and Amazon, is also a vibrant and diverse destination. And it certainly delivers if clients love shopping, seafood, award-winning wine and coffee – Seattle is the birthplace of Starbucks. Highlights include the 110-year-old Pike Place Market, Chihuly Gardens, the Museum of Pop Culture and the iconic Space Needle. There are two centrally located cruise piers – Bell Street Pier 66 (home to Norwegian Cruise Line) and Smith Cove Pier 91.





easy access to the fabulous Mandara Spa and fitness centre, and Mini Suites, which are ideal for couples or families. There are also lots of connecting staterooms.

Hidden at the top of the ship, The Haven is a hub of luxury – a boutique hotel within a ship if you like. Often guests who book to stay here don't leave this tranquil, elegant enclave for their entire cruise.

And who can blame them? Accommodation is elegant and well-appointed with Bulgari toiletries in the bathrooms, plus there's a 24-hour butler service, concierge service, restaurant, bar and private sundeck.

A real foodie's paradise, there are more than 25 dining options on board Bliss – from the Q Texas Smokehouse featuring an authentic Texas BBQ to the Mexican eatery Los Lobos, there's something for everyone. Coffee fans will also appreciate the first Starbucks outlet

on a Norwegian ship, in homage to the ship's homeport of Seattle.

Entertainment is a key USP on Norwegian ships, and Bliss is blessed with a number of first-rate shows. ¡HAVANA! is a colourful celebration of Cuba's music and culture, taking the audience back in time to its heyday in the 1950s. This upbeat musical is making its world debut on Bliss, so is definitely one not to miss.

The award-winning Broadway show Jersey Boys is also on the entertainment programme, and features the true story of Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons. It's a real singalong production that will appeal to most.

One of the biggest draws during the evening – certainly when I was on board – is The Cavern Club with its excellent Beatles cover band. With an intimate, speakeasy atmosphere, this is a great

place for an after-dinner drink with a roll call of classic tunes included.

When it's time to wind down, there is no better place to do it than in the extensive and award-winning Mandara Spa, which offers more than 50 speciality treatments as well as a Thermal Suite (additional charge applies), Vitality Pool and salt room – grab a heated relaxation bed in front of the full-length windows for unbeatable views while you chill.

This ship is custom-built for a well-rounded cruise holiday and we love that she's based in buzzy Seattle, the gateway to Alaska. Can you imagine yourself on Bliss? ⚓

BOOK IT

The seven-day Awa of Alaska itinerary on Norwegian Bliss departs May 2019, with prices starting at £2,363pp.



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Departing May to October 2019

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From £2,545pp

Imperial Jewels of China

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Departing March to November 2019

From £3,815pp

Lyon & Provence

8 days, 7 guided tours
Departing March to November 2019

From £2,145pp

Magnificent Mekong

17 days, 14 guided tours
Departing March to December 2019

From £4,345pp

Grand European Tour

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Making a splash

How river cruises are really firing the imagination of UK holidaymakers

More than 210,000 passengers chose to board a river cruise last year, with European cruises proving the most popular – particularly those on the Douro, the Rhine and the Danube, while Russian waterways also remain a firm favourite with British holidaymakers.

Looking outside Europe, three rivers accounted for the bulk of passengers: the Mekong, the Nile and the Irrawaddy. Other non-European rivers that experienced a rise in visitors were the Ganges and the Brahmaputra.

There are a number of key operators in this sector, including the likes of Fred Olsen, Riviera Travel and Viking River Cruises. Fred Olsen offers a choice of seven itineraries, among which the five-night Springtime Dutch Discovery takes passengers from Amsterdam to Dusseldorf for £999 per person.

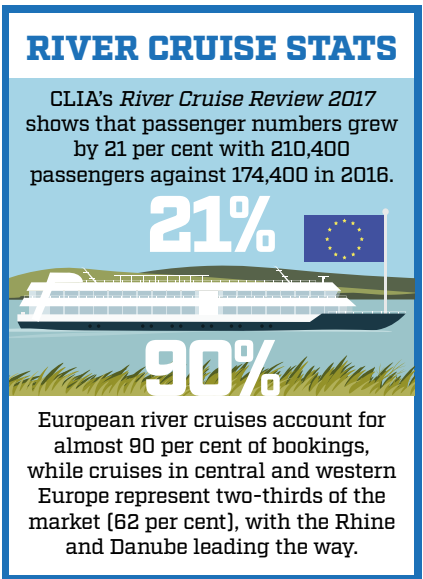
Passengers on board a Viking River Cruises ship might consider a themed voyage like the Waterways of the Tsars, which takes in the highly instagrammable cities of St Petersburg and Moscow in a grand 13-night tour costing from £3,545.

Meanwhile, Riviera Travel offers an impressive selection of cruise routes, taking in a whole host of European destinations such as Bruges, Porto, Paris and Strasbourg.

Wine lovers can meet renowned connoisseurs Susie Barrie and Peter Richards while admiring the stunning scenery of the Rhine Gorge, Main and Danube and enjoying guided tours of Würzburg, Vienna, Bratislava and Budapest on a 15-day cruise costing from £2,499.



The town of Durnstein overlooks the glorious Danube



Choosing a land-based riverside holiday may seem to defeat the object of the exercise, but in the interests of a fair comparison we've found a week-long Rhine tour by coach that also takes in the Moselle Valleys for £629.

The itinerary covers the charming wine towns of Cochem and Rudesheim, plus the romantic city of Heidelberg, with its castle ruins and red sandstone buildings. The price includes six nights' hotel accommodation with continental breakfast and four evening meals.

The thing to keep in mind is that cruise river holidays offer much more than land ones, including impressive dining options, on-board entertainment, and the chance to visit places only accessible by ship. ⚓

	ITINERARY	DESTINATIONS VISITED	ENTERTAINMENT	ACCOMMODATION	MEALS	PRICE
RIVER CRUISE	Christmas Markets along the Rhine	Andernach, Oberwesel, Koblenz, Cologne	On offer every night, plus a welcome drink, Captain's get-together and party night	The River Cruise Line's MPS Lady Anne	Full board, plus early risers and mid-morning tea and coffee	Four days from £399 , departing 12 December 2018*
VS						
RIVER LAND TOUR	The Rhine & Moselle Valleys	Cochem, Koblenz, Assmannshausen, Rudesheim, St Goar, Heidelberg, Cologne	None specified	Six nights at a four-star hotel	Breakfast and dinner	From £629

*Includes return coach travel from chosen departure point and return ferry crossing

Take the tour

With interest in immersive experiences growing fast, now is the ideal time to sell pre- and post-cruise tours

With the growing popularity of immersive experiences, including tours tailored to suit specific interests, many major cruise companies, such as Tauck and APT, have noted a significant increase in pre- or post-cruise tour bookings.

So, whether its Saga's tours on iconic trains, Seabourn's escorted pre-and post-cruise Seabourn Journeys, Rocky Mountaineer's rail cruise combos, or Wendy Wu's enticing range of specialist trips for solo travellers, now is the time to sell, sell, sell.

SHIPS AND TRAINS WITH SAGA

What do they do? At Saga, there are tours to suit all styles of travel, as Joe Sutcliffe, head of Saga Holidays' long-haul and specialist products, explains.

"For those travelling alone, we have a range of solo traveller departures, and for those who want a more active and immersive experience, our 'Go For It' tours feature everything from hiking through Italy to travelling with the locals on the Trans-Siberian railway."

Best tour? Passengers will love the chance to take an exciting, once-in-a-lifetime journey with Saga's Trans-Siberian Railway Adventure, which crosses two continents from Moscow to Beijing aboard one of the world's most iconic trains.

Ideal cruise pairing? For a totally immersive experience book Saga's 10-night St Petersburg to Moscow cruise, where highlights include a tour of the magnificent Hermitage State Museum and a trip to visit picturesque wooden homesteads on Kizhi Island.

Book it? Prices for the Trans-Siberian train escorted tour start at £5,999pp, based on a 13 September 2019 departure. Prices for Saga's St Petersburg to Moscow cruise start at £1369pp, based on a 29 August 2019 departure.

ASIA TO THE STATES WITH TITAN

What do they do? Titan's 2019 brochure features more than 200 tours. From exploring the wilds of Borneo to soaking up the southern charms of Savannah or strolling along China's Great Wall, most



The Trans Siberian Railway: cross two continents on an iconic train

are designed for passengers seeking immersive experiences.

Best tour? On Titan's four-day Bangkok to Kanchanaburi tour, passengers stay in luxury hotels while exploring the Thai capital's palaces and museums. From there it's onwards to Kanchanaburi where they will have a chance to visit the bridge

on the River Kwai, which inspired the eponymous, iconic 1957 World War Two film.

Ideal cruise pairing? Regent Seven Seas' 16-night cruise through the South China Sea, via Cambodia and Vietnam, to Borneo and China, includes a local boat trip to see some of the beautiful 2,000 or



Visit Bangkok in luxury with Titan

more islands peppering Vietnam's Halong Bay, and several days exploring the bustling streets of lively Hong Kong.

Book it? Prices for Titan's 23-night Bangkok to Hong Kong cruise and tour combo start at £8,299pp, based on a February 2019 departure.

EUROPE TO ANTARCTICA WITH RIVIERA

What do they do? Passengers who seek immersive experiences will love Riviera's new Personalise Your Holiday concept, where insider-style tours range from sampling pintxos in traditional Catalan

bars to bush walking with a South African ranger. The company has also launched an exciting range of new tours for 2019, including escorted trips to Sardinia, Montenegro and the Middle East.

Best tour? With the chance to chug to the peak of La Rhune mountain by vintage cog train, Riviera's eight-day Basque country, La Rioja and Burgos tour is ideal for passengers seeking a glimpse into Spanish life.

Ideal cruise pairing? For more of that sun-packed Mediterranean lifestyle, pair this tour with MSC Cruises' nine-night Mediterranean round-trip cruise, where highlights include exploring the Maltese port of La Valetta.

Book it? Prices for Riviera's Basque country La Rioja and Burgos start at £899 based on a 9 April 2019 departure. Prices for MSC's nine-night Mediterranean cruise from Barcelona start at £949pp, based on a 19 April 2019 departure. ➤



Marques de Riscal wine country in Elciego, Rioja



One of the Big Five you could see with Silversea

SELL IT

The chance to see more: a cruise combined with a pre or post tour is the ideal way for passengers to get an in-depth look at one, or several, destinations.

Explore in safety: accompanied land tours are the ideal way for passengers to get off the beaten track without getting into trouble.

Get repeat business: creating a bespoke cruise holiday for your clients is sure to impress.

INSIDER ITINERARIES WITH TAUCK

What do they do? "Tauck offers small group itineraries for those looking for deeper, more authentic travel experiences. We also have Tauck Bridges, which allow families to travel together easily with no stress and reconnect as a family," says Tauck's UK sales manager, Kathryn Coles.

Best tour? Part of Tauck's Earth Journey portfolio, which was created in partnership with BBC Earth, the spectacular Pura Vida tour will appeal to passengers who dream

of bathing in volcanic hot springs, meeting big butterflies in the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve or floating along an inland jungle river.

Ideal cruise pairing? From visits to local coffee plantations to meeting the Guna Indians of the San Blas Islands, Tauck's 12-day Panama Canal & Costa Rica cruise offers an exciting range of wildlife encounters and cultural experiences.

Book it? Prices for Tauck's (www.tauck.co.uk) eight-day Pura Vida tour start at £2,750pp, based on a 7 January 2019 departure. Meanwhile, prices for Tauck's

12-day The Panama Canal & Costa Rica cruise start at £5,040pp, based on a 29 January 2019 departure.

EXCLUSIVE GROUP TOURS WITH SILVERSEA

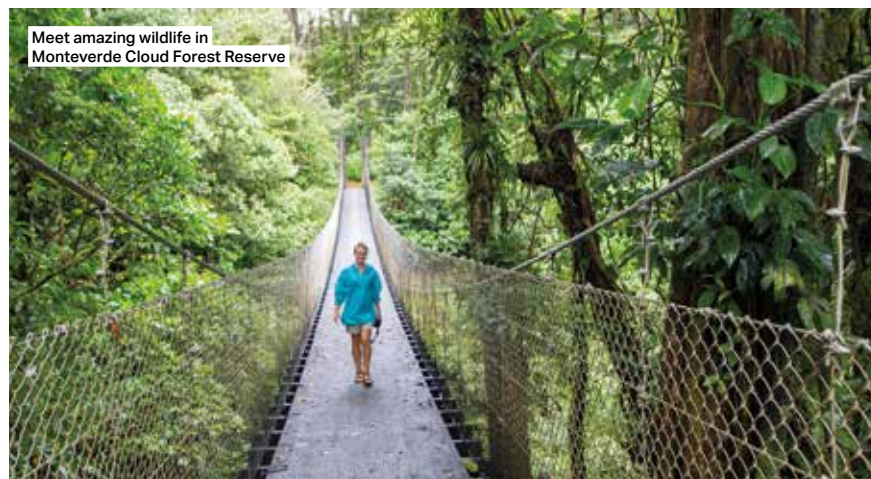
What do they do? Silversea's new Couture Collection offers a thrilling range of luxurious small group tours where exclusive thrills range from tiger spotting in India's Ranthambore National Park, to marvelling at scenery near the South Pole.

Best tour? Silversea's eight-day Rwanda and the Serengeti: Walking in the Footsteps of Giants tour offers passengers the chance to trek through Rwanda's Volcanoes National Park seeking mountain gorillas. It also includes a game drive to seek the Big Five in Tanzania's Serengeti National Park.

Ideal cruise pairing? Choose Silversea's 16-day Silver Discoverer Africa and Indian Ocean expedition cruise, which travels, via a string of exotic ports and islands, from Zanzibar to Durban.

Book it? Prices for Silversea's Rwanda and the Serengeti tour start at £20,734, based on a 20 November 2018 departure. Prices for the Silver Discoverer Africa and Indian Ocean expedition cruise start at £14,153pp, based on a 27 November 2018 departure. ⚓

WORDS: HEIDI FULLER-LOVE



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31st October	Newcastle
6th November	Liverpool
8th November	Tunbridge Wells
13th November	London
15th November	Guildford

Agent feedback from Cruise challenges

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

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



cruise
TRADE NEWS

The lucky coins are put in position



The fireworks begin

CRYSTAL ENDEAVOR: THE WORLD'S LARGEST MEGAYACHT

In August, we were among the lucky few invited to the keel-laying ceremony of Crystal Yacht Expedition Cruises' first luxury expedition yacht, *Crystal Endeavor*. The ceremony, held at MV WERFTEN's Stralsund shipyard in Germany, was attended by German chancellor Angela Merkel, Crystal president and CEO Tom Wolber, and Genting Hong Kong's executive chairman and CEO Tan Sri Lim Kok Thay.

"It is truly a thrill to mark this important milestone for *Crystal Endeavor* and the entire Crystal family, as this yacht will change the way guests can explore the world both adventurously and luxuriously," said Wolber.

The polar-class *Crystal Endeavor* will feature 100 suites, six restaurants, expedition rooms

and private butler service for every suite. Its PC6 designation will allow it to operate in summer and autumn through medium first-year ice. *Endeavor's* inaugural season runs from August 2020 through to January 2021 with voyages of 12 to 22 days.

Chancellor Merkel added: "The keel laying for *Crystal Endeavor* here in my political home town of Stralsund marks a special moment for me that is doubly significant. Today, the foundation has been laid for this highly sophisticated, state-of-the-art cruise ship. But the ceremony itself, which is taking place in the lively shipyard with the participation of so many employees and trainees, also bodes well for the future of shipbuilding in the Hanseatic city of Stralsund and in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern."



The *Crystal Endeavor* team



Endeavor plaque



Tom Wolber, left, Crystal president and CEO



Chancellor Merkel is joined onstage by the Crystal team



A rendering of the Crystal Endeavor

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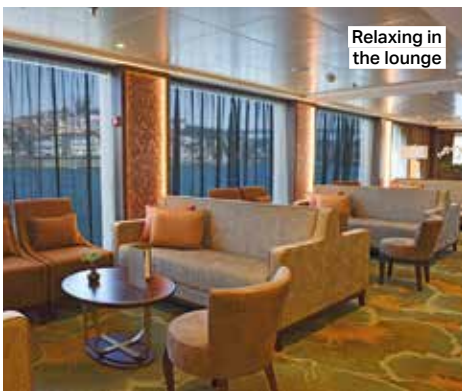
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MS DOURO SPLENDOUR

Riviera Travel's *MS Douro Splendour*, which launched this year, has been purpose-built to fit the size limitations of the Douro's five locks. The ship, which can accommodate 126 guests and a crew of 36, features an outdoor swimming pool on the Sun Deck, a boutique gift shop, and a restaurant on the main deck serving buffet breakfast, lunch and four-course dinner – and much more besides that. The ship has standard, superior suites and deluxe balcony suites on offer, as well as floor-to-ceiling windows and a spa and wellness area with a fitness room.



Enjoy a drink at the bar



The purpose-built *Splendour*



Out on deck



"The level of expertise is truly impressive"

Vlad Saveliev, global purpose specialist at G Adventures, on learning from the experts, dining with a humpback whale and starting a queue for no reason

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

When our travellers take a trip with G Adventures they become part of a movement, using travel as a force for good. Whether it's supporting a social enterprise in one of the destinations we visit, which provides opportunities and employment for local communities, or helping to fund some of the many projects we work with as part of our Ocean Health Fund, travelling with G Adventures helps change people's lives, and the planet, for the better.

Our 134-passenger ship, the *G Expedition*, allows travellers the opportunity to explore some of the world's most remote places. We often refer to it as a 'floating classroom' due to the number of experts and educational seminars held on board.

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

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

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

The most recent incident happened at a



David Attenborough
– a fearless force for change



Sierra Negra: a hike that's on Vlad's bucket list



How a humpback whale keeps cruisers entertained

petrol station, when I parked to refuel and quickly pop to the toilet. After 15 minutes I had created a queue of six or seven people; that was before I realised no one was actually in the toilet...

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

I was once asked whether, on one of our Svalbard trips, the expedition ship would go through the islands as part of the itinerary... I reassured them that our ship would go around the islands, but not through them.

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

It has to be the barbecue we have once per trip on the *G Expedition*. On one of our Arctic expeditions we enjoyed the meal on deck while a humpback whale entertained us right next to the ship.

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

The *G Expedition* has to be my favourite. The level of expertise on board is truly impressive, offering access and greater understanding of the planet's most remote places. With 134 passengers, the ship has a lovely intimate and friendly feel.

Which port would you definitely disembark in?

Ushuaia. It is the southernmost city in the world, so I really have to tick that off the bucket list.

Which cruise is on your bucket list?

Our 10-day Galapagos North West and Central Islands aboard the 16-passenger *Yolita*. Snorkeling along with sea lions and turtles, spotting the incredible wildlife, hiking right to the top of the Sierra Negra and then relaxing on the white sand beaches is right up there on my list.

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

If I didn't work for G Adventures, I'd probably be working in the expedition cruising field. And if I wasn't working in the travel industry, I would probably go to Argentina and focus on farming. 🌱

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