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WELCOME...

TO THE 2026 ULTIMATE OCEAN DESTINATION GUIDE

On one cruise, you could be sipping a margarita on deck while pondering which flavour of ice cream to try next, while on another, you could be cutting through the chop of the Arctic sea on the lookout for polar bears and narwhals. The possibilities of a holiday at sea are truly endless, and thanks to the wealth of new and refreshed itineraries and ships launching in 2026, there's now even more ways for Brits to get their fix of life on the water.

Increasingly popular destinations like the Middle East, Southeast Asia and South America continue to draw the gazes of nomadic explorers looking to satiate their desire to uncover new realms, while returning favourites like the Mediterranean and Caribbean cement their positions as the world's most preferred hotspots, with year-round sun, sand and sights keeping all ages coming back for more.

We've assembled this guide to help you keep abreast of these destinations, providing you with everything you need to highlight the best activities and cruise lines in the world's most storied cities, port towns and islands. We've interviewed the heads of tourist boards and cruise conglomerates from

On the cover: Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines



ABOVE Southeast Asia is increasingly popular with nomadic explorers

around the world to get an insight into what's to come next year, and canvassed cruise experts for their top selling tips.

There's also a roundup of the new ships coming online next year, including industry-leading additions for Royal Caribbean, MSC Cruises, Norwegian Cruise Line and Regent Seven Seas Cruises. And don't forget to flip the magazine over and read our 2026 Ultimate River Destination Guide for a closer look at what's new on the world's waterways.

Will Payne
Editor

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Adriatic & **AEGEAN**

Beach resorts, historic cities and uninterrupted
sunlight await in this picturesque paradise of
the eastern Mediterranean

SPLIT

As Croatia's second largest city, Split blends historic charm with vibrant coastal life. The UNESCO-listed Diocletian's Palace forms the heart of the city, surrounded by lively cafes, boutique shops and restaurants, like ZOI, which sits on the perimeter of the palace offering gourmet dishes and fragrant cocktails. Visitors can also climb the bell tower of St Domnius Cathedral for panoramic views of the old town and harbour, or stroll along the Riva Promenade, perfect for a social media snap and a coffee. Split is ideal for customers who enjoy city breaks and cultural experiences, as well as island hoppers and those looking to extend their cruise with a pre- or post-stay add on.

KATAKOLON

Known locally as the gateway to Ancient Olympia, Katakolon is a small Peloponnesian port credited with the creation of the Olympic Games and as one of Greece's most significant archaeological sites. Just 30 minutes from the harbour, Olympia is the most popular shore excursion for cruisers, with temples, stadia and museum awaiting to be explored. Guests will also find a waterfront lined with tavernas, souvenir shops and cafes. Some cruise lines also offer tours to local wineries and olive oil farms, like Magna Grecia Farm and Oilympian Koufolias. Recommend a Katakolon call to history buffs, cultural aficionados and Grecian enthusiasts.

BAR

Often overshadowed by its neighbouring Montenegro port of Kotor, Bar still stands confidently as its own Adriatic gem. Travellers will find a mix of lively culture and history, with access to Lake Skadar National Park, a biodiverse wetland famed for its birdlife and traditional fishing villages. Cruisers can also visit Stari Bar, the ruins of a town set against the sweeping mountains showcasing centuries of Venetian, Ottoman and Slavic influence. The port town itself has a lively marina dotted with cafes, beaches and shops. Perfect for history lovers and wildlife enthusiasts, travellers of all ages will find something to kill time in Bar.





ALASKA

From mountain ranges and national forests to bald eagles and brown bears, Alaska is teeming with experiences awaiting to be unlocked

Just like its state flower, the alpine forget-me-not, Alaska is not easily forgotten. The USA's largest state greets visitors with pyramidal mountain peaks, sweeping national forests, and multi-mile glaciers, stained electric blue. Wildlife plays a leading role in Alaskan cruises. Shore excursions take passengers in search of bald eagles, brown bears, and – between April and November – orca and humpback whales. Yet the region's human history is just as rich. Passengers in this part of the world can immerse themselves in the stories of everyone from Alaska's first peoples to gold prospectors and even lumberjacks.



JUNEAU

Tucked between the Alexander Islands and the snow-crested Boundary Range mountains to the north of the Inside Passage, Juneau is the capital of Alaska. Inaccessible by road, the city is best visited by boat. From the port where cruise ships dock, passengers can hop on the Goldbelt Tram, a cable car that ascends 1,800 feet into the peaks that peer out over the city, to access nature and walking trails and the Timberline Bar & Grill. Alternatively, shore excursions take cruisers on whale watching trips to catch sight of orcas and humpbacks, or to the 13.6 mile long Mendenhall Glacier, with its Slush Puppie blue glow.

KETCHIKAN

Found towards the southern edge of the Inside Passage, Ketchikan is known fondly as the salmon capital of the world. Shore excursions take passengers on salmon-fishing trips, salmon cookery classes, and to restaurants where the blush pink fish is always the dish of the day. Days can also be filled with ziplining through the rainforests of nearby



How to sell

"I have just returned from Alaska with Holland America Line accompanied by my wife and children, and we all loved it – feedback from the kids is it was the best holiday ever! It's a family-friendly destination, full of wonder and adventure – it's a great opportunity for us all to embrace and promote.

We are really excited about the brand new opportunity in 2026 to cruise to Alaska on board Virgin Voyages' new ship, *Brilliant Lady*. Virgin's new onboard experience is, in and of itself, incredible, but now, being able to sail to Alaska will appeal to a whole new market – older family groups (sailors with Virgin have to be over 18) will literally have a whale of a time.

At Iglu Cruise we pre-package many Alaska cruises with land tours and hotel stays. Whilst in North America, it would be such a shame not to have more than one type of experience."

Dave Mills, chief commercial officer, Iglu Cruise

Don't miss

Duck into the wooden-fronted Klondike Doughboy, in Downtown Skagway, to try a traditional Alaskan frybread. These dinner plate-sized ovals of dough are deep fried and served hot and showered in sugar. You'll have no trouble identifying this particular bakery, as queues usually snake out the door.

“Wildlife plays a leading role in Alaskan cruises, yet the human history is just as rich

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Alaska's scenery combines sweeping national forests and multi-mile glaciers; wildlife plays a leading role in cruises to the region; Skagway looks like a Western film set

Tongass National Forest, or hiking along the forest's nature trails to observation points that take in the salmon hunting spots of black bears.

SKAGWAY

Teetering on the northern tip of the Inside Passage, Skagway was one of the boom towns of the Klondike Gold Rush. In the late 19th century, hundreds of thousands of prospectors poured through here, en route to the gold fields further north. Today, it's still a golden nugget of a town. Visitors can swagger around the Downtown area, which looks like a Western film set with its saloon-style buildings, ride the narrow-gauge White Pass railway that once transported fortune hunters to the panning sites, and have a go at panning for gold themselves at Skagway's Dredgetown attraction. ●

Get on board

Holland America Line's seven-day Glacier Discovery Northbound cruise aboard *Nieuw Amsterdam*, from Vancouver to Whittier via the Inside Passage, Glacier Bay and College Fjord, Ketchikan, Juneau and Skagway departs on 14 June 2026, from £939pp. hollandamerica.com





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Atlantic **ISLANDS**

Aside from golden sand beaches and vibrant port towns, these pristine spots of land are brimming with discoveries waiting to be made

Forged centuries ago in the fire of volcanoes, the Atlantic Islands are still hot properties. The lure of these lozenges of land, located off the west coast of Africa, begins with their beaches – mile-long strands of powder-puff soft sands. Yet there's so much more to these places than their coastlines. Lava caves, lagoons, pine forests, mountain peaks and even wineries await cruisers willing to make a break from the beach.

FUERTEVENTURA

Cruise passengers in Fuerteventura can enjoy Caribbean-quality beaches, not least in Corralejo Natural Park, a 25-minute transfer north of capital Puerto del Rosario, where cruise ships dock. There are more than 26 square kilometres of shell-white sands here backed by billowing dunes. Elsewhere, Fuerteventura entertains cruisers with coastal lava cave walking trails, volcano



Don't miss

Tenerife is speckled with wineries. Bodegas Alvaro has been producing wines for more than 80 years. Visitors here can take part in tastings, tuck into tapas, and peruse the winery's private collection of 40,000 bottles of wines.

hikes, traditional towns like Bentacuria boasting red-roofed, whitewashed buildings and cobbled streets, and dolphin and whale spotting boat trips. Book clients on April to June and September to November trips for the best chance of sightings.

“**Lava caves, lagoons, pine forests, mountain peaks and wineries await cruisers**



LANZAROTE

The indigenous name for Lanzarote is Tyteroygaka which translates to “all that is ochre” and passengers taking a shore excursion to the south of the island will soon understand why. This region, known as Timanfaya National Park, is clad in Martian-red lava fields that were created by six years of ferocious volcanic activity during the early 18th century. Plus, it's coiffed with the rust red peaks of almost 25 volcanoes. Guided tours here are one of the top things to do on the island, alongside sunbathing stints on the toast-tinted sands of Puerto del Carmen beach and trips to the underground lava caves and lagoon in the island's north.

GRAN CANARIA

Known as The Small Continent for the diversity of its landscapes, Gran Canaria morphs from rolling sand dunes to fertile pine forests, citrus-scented orange groves, neatly pleated vineyards, coffee plantations, volcanic craters, and more. The island is also sprinkled with picture-perfect towns. Puerto de Mogán in the southwest of the island is known as the Canary Islands' Little Venice thanks to its canal, bridges, and the balconied buildings that overlook the water. Firgas, to the north, meanwhile, is titled the Village of Water for its cascading fountain and natural springs.



How to sell

“The Azores is one of the most beautifully unique archipelagos I've been to, easily visited on a cruise and best done April to October. Sea days will be broken up, providing the opportunity to see dramatic coastlines, small fishing villages, hidden waterfalls and stunning lakes, all surrounded by lush green pastures. Many transatlantic cruises dock here, as well as shorter itineraries from Lisbon. Whilst there, suggest visiting Europe's oldest tea plantation, pineapple farms, off-road bus tours, or exploring UNESCO World Heritage sites.”

Lucy Dobson, Travel Counsellor

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Lanzarote's Timanfaya National Park is forged from volcanic activity; Fuerteventura's beaches are idyllic; Gran Canaria is sprinkled with picture-perfect towns

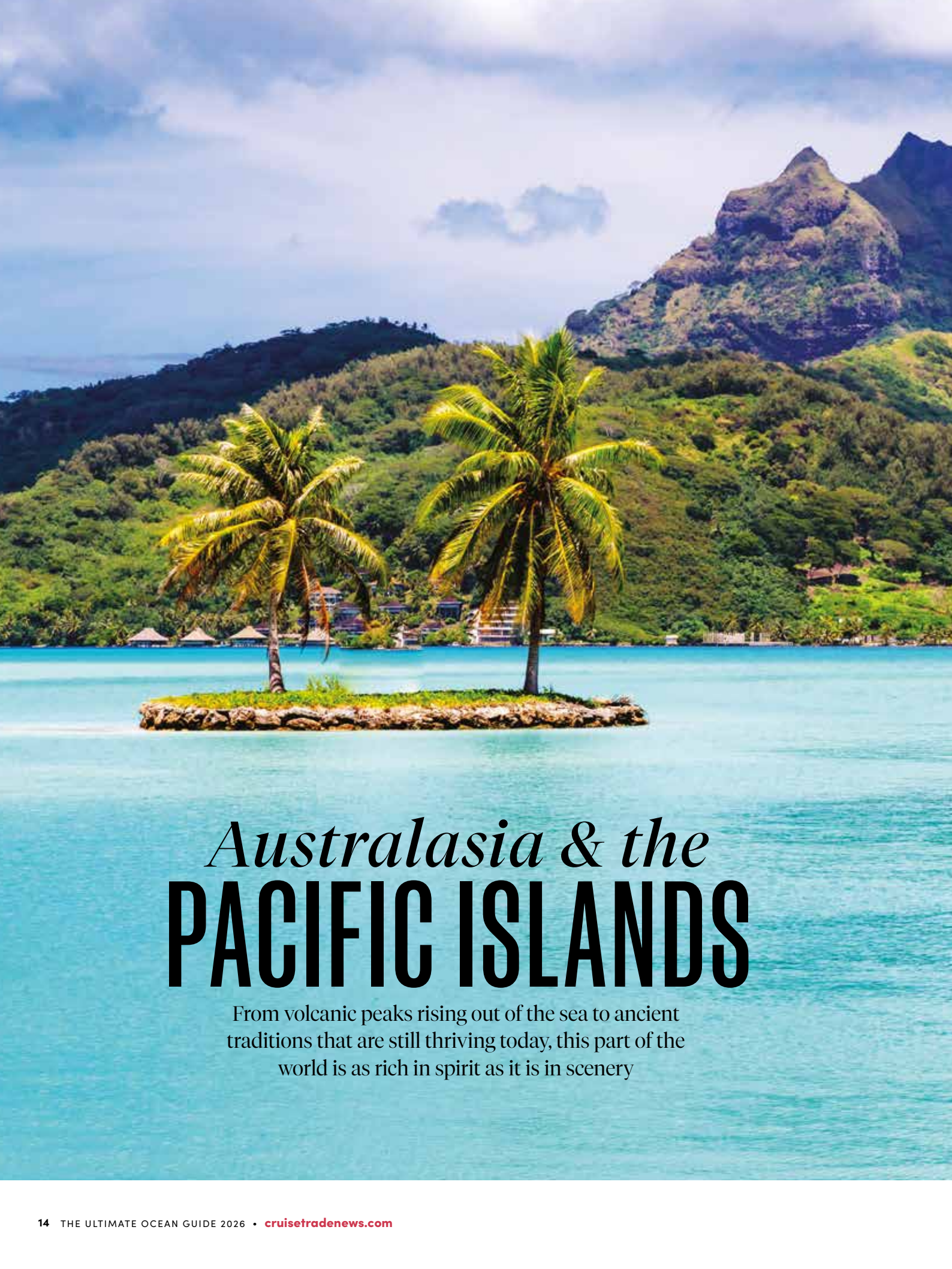
TENERIFE

Nicknamed the Island of Eternal Spring, thanks to its constant balmy temperatures, the largest Canary island can be visited year-round. Highlights of a trip here include summiting the 12,000-foot Mount Teide volcano by motor coach, taking in the petrified lava fields of Teide National Park, which looks like a *Dune* movie film set, and burrowing through the lava tube tunnels at The Cave of the Wind. Customers who want a less active day may prefer to book a beach transfer to Las Teresitas, where a mile of chiringuito (beach bar) backed sand awaits. 📍

Get on board

Marella Cruises' eight-night Canarian Flavours cruise aboard *Marella Voyager*, return from Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Tenerife, Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, Arrecife, Lanzarote, Puerto del Rosario, Fuerteventura, Funchal, Madeira, San Sebastian, La Gomera, departs on 10th April 2026, from £1,202pp.

tui.co.uk/cruise



Australasia & the **PACIFIC ISLANDS**

From volcanic peaks rising out of the sea to ancient traditions that are still thriving today, this part of the world is as rich in spirit as it is in scenery



FIJI

A collection of more than 300 islands scattered across the South Pacific, Fiji is famous for its warm hospitality and turquoise-hued waters. Beyond the beaches, travellers can hike through rainforests, visit waterfalls deep within Viti Levu's interior and explore local villages to experience daily island life. Coral reefs are packed with marine life, making this a diver's dream, while excursions to traditional kava ceremonies provide a glimpse into Fiji's enduring culture and community spirit.

NEW ZEALAND

Cruises around New Zealand reveal a world of contrasts, from fjords carved by glaciers in Milford Sound to the rolling vineyards of Marlborough. On the North Island, visitors can learn about Māori heritage through performances and art, experience geothermal wonders in Rotorua, or wander Wellington's waterfront. Many itineraries include cruising through Fiordland National Park, where peaks shrouded in mist and cascading waterfalls create some of the world's most cinematic photos.

AUSTRALIA

While Sydney and the Great Barrier Reef often steal the spotlight, cruises along Australia's west coast and around Tasmania reveal a more rugged, unspoiled side of the continent. From Fremantle near Perth, ships trace routes along the Indian Ocean, calling at Broome for its pearling history and the striking red cliffs of Kimberley, where weirs meet deep-blue seas. Further south, the island of Tasmania offers a cooler contrast with its wild national parks, excellent vineyards, endemic wildlife and remote sun-kissed beaches.



Baltics & **SCANDINAVIA**

Intrepid explorers will relish the chance to unlock
the imposing fjords and culinary delights of
Europe's most northern reaches

I tineraries around the Baltics and Scandinavia promise atmospheric old towns, multicoloured waterside wharf districts, and seaside cities where maritime history burrows back to the Middle Ages. The journeys between ports of call in Denmark, Finland, Latvia, Estonia, Sweden and Norway are often as memorable as the stops themselves, coursing along fjords, navigating through little-known archipelagos, and passing coastlines corrugated with sheer cliffs and unpeopled beaches.

COPENHAGEN

Did you know that there's a Buckingham Palace equivalent in Copenhagen? Amalienborg Palace is the official residence of the Danish royal family, and it's open to visitors every day for both tours and self-guided visits. Advise clients to book a visit around midday and they'll be able to witness the daily



Don't miss

Denmark and Norway are the home of 'hygge', which is the practice of making yourself cosy with a warm drink, a sweet treat, and good company. So, visits here should entail a liberal helping of coffee shop stops, sampling hygge-inducing baked goods like cream and custard-filled 'spandauer' and chocolate-coated marshmallow treat 'flødeboller'.

SAAREMAA

Estonia's largest island is a place of pine forests, juniper fields and rust-red coastal cliffs, which are visible from the spot where cruise ships dock. For more island views, passengers can make their way to the 17th-century Sõrve lighthouse in the south of the island. Its tower is 52 metres tall and can be climbed in summer for 360-degree vistas of the Sõrve Cape and the islets of the Irbe Strait beyond. The Kaali meteorite field

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Copenhagen's vibrant architecture is a feast for the eyes; Amalienborg Palace's changing of the guard ceremony; Tallinn hosts a wide variety of festive markets at Christmas

Explore seaside cities where maritime history burrows back to the Middle Ages

is another spot on the top to-do list. The ground here is pock-marked with craters gauged out by a meteorite strike more than 7,000 years ago.

KLAIPĖDA

Perched on Lithuania's east coast, Klaipėda is Lithuania's only port city. Passengers can stay in town to explore the Castle Museum, and the Sculpture Park, to see the haunting Black Ghost sculpture in the marina. Alternatively, they can make the short ferry ride over to the Curonian Spit. This 98-kilometre spill of sand dunes is protected by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. Visitors can explore by following the nature trails on foot, hire a bike, or ride the bus around the spit. 📍

Get on board

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines' nine-night Scenic Waterways & Cities of Scandinavia cruise aboard *MS Balmoral*, return from Newcastle via Oslofjord, Oslo, Copenhagen, Gothenburg and Skagen, departs on 14 May 2026, from £1,499pp for an interior cabin.

fredolsencruises.com



How to sell

"Guests can cruise past the Olsen family home in Hvitsten and through the Stockholm Archipelago, while visiting standout cities like Copenhagen, Tallinn and Riga. Thanks to our smaller ships, we access narrow waterways and charming ports, bringing guests closer to the heart of each destination. It's a more immersive and rewarding way to experience the region's culture, storied history and natural beauty."

Geoff Ridgeon, head of sales, Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines

changing of the guard ceremony, in which bearskin hat-headed soldiers march, drum and heel-click their way on and off duty. On days when the king is in residence, the pageantry is accompanied by the music of a full military band.

TALLINN

Recognised as one of the best-preserved Medieval cities in Europe, Tallinn Old Town is protected as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Roving around amongst the crayon-coloured buildings here, visitors will see sights like the 19th-century Alexander Nevsky Cathedral with its five grand onion domes, St Olaf's Church with its lance-like spire and 232-step observation deck, and the Town Hall Square, which is penned in with shops, cafes and restaurants, with seating that spills out onto the cobbles in summer. Sell cruises at Christmas so clients can visit the city's cinnamon-scented festive markets.



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BRITISH ISLES

You don't need to fly thousands of miles to have an adventure-packed cruise experience. **Will Payne** speaks with chair of Cruise Britain Ian McQuade to see what our home nation has to offer guests in 2026 and beyond



From the rugged coastline of Northumberland and the craic of Northern Ireland to the bustling hub of Liverpool and the bright lights of Dublin, a cruise around the British Isles has plenty to offer all types of travellers.

Departure options are endless, from Southampton, Portsmouth, Dover and Tilbury to Liverpool, Greenock and the Port of Tyne. Cruises around the British Isles let guests tap into almost 2.7 billion years of rich heritage, history and culture.



Guests can tap into almost 2.7 billion years of rich heritage, history and culture

Representing the UK's cruise industry is Cruise Britain, a joint initiative between the UK's cruise ports and providers to raise the profile of our coastal destinations. Here, chair Ian McQuade looks ahead to the future of sailing around Britain after another record year for domestic cruising.

Why should someone take a cruise around Britain?

It's hard to know where to start! There's such a diversity of ports and destinations within short sailing distances that it's possible to tick off bucket-list moments, exclusive experiences and hidden gems all within the same holiday. Just one itinerary could take guests to the Highlands & Islands (think neolithic splendours and wild landscapes); to the rugged coast and castles of Northumberland, to the craic of Northern Ireland; to the scenic Guernsey lanes and to the hidden stately homes of



Devon and Cornwall. Within easy reach of their cruise ship, guests can explore world-renowned icons, hidden heritage, quaint high streets and bustling cities – and still have time for some shopping.

What should agents focus on when selling domestic cruises?

The sheer effortlessness of a domestic cruise cannot be underestimated. There



There's such a diversity of ports and destinations within short sailing distances



are departures from several regional ports as well as from Southampton, so agents are encouraged to look at options with short drive times or ports accommodating operators that would suit their customers. As with any cruise, the joy of waking up in the morning and finding that you have arrived in a wonderful destination with no effort at all is quite something. Unpack just the once and explore the easy way; guests will see their own country through new eyes!



British Isles highlights

EDINBURGH

Scotland's compact, hilly capital boasts a medieval old town and elegant Georgian New Town with gardens and neoclassical buildings, making it the perfect stop for culture buffs and avid historians. Looming over the city is Edinburgh Castle, home to Scotland's crown jewels and the Stone of Destiny, which was used in the coronation of the country's historic rulers. During a cruise call, guests can walk the Royal Mile and explore the National Museum of Scotland, before stopping for a dram of locally distilled whisky.

FALMOUTH

Blending rich maritime history with modern creativity, Falmouth is building a

name for itself as one of the South West's most exciting cruise calls. Guests can explore local attractions like Pendennis Castle and the National Maritime Museum, or grab a three cheese and onion sourdough bloomer from Gylly Beach café while they try and spy firecrests soaring above.

SOUTHAMPTON

As the UK's largest cruise port, Southampton attracts millions of cruisers every year. The city's tradition with cruising began 175 years ago when P&O Cruises began advertising sailings to Egypt. Today, guests can take a trip to Westquay shopping centre and the Solent Sky Museum. But a stop in Southampton isn't complete without a visit to the SeaCity Museum to witness an interactive model of the Titanic, which departed from the south-coast city in 1912.

How important is cruise to the UK economy?

Cruise makes a £5.8bn contribution to the UK economy every year, which delivers significant benefit to all parts of the UK. CLIA research shows that over 60 per cent of cruise guests will return to a destination first visited on a cruise, so the economic benefit continues into the future. Annually, over 50 ports welcome a cruise ship and coastal communities can really see and shape the positive impact of cruise visits. Ports are continually looking at ways in which cruise ships can be better accommodated and how planning can dovetail with community views.

How will Cruise Britain work to attract more guests in 2026?

Operators look much further ahead than any following year and we are already promoting the next three to five years. Our members are working to support deployment plans that are still at the

early stages of development, as well as those already published. In addition to the promotional programme, we work to ensure that Britain remains an attractive destination for the cruise sector and are encouraged by the recent publication of the UK Government's Cruise Growth Plan. 📍

CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT

Edinburgh's majestic castle looms over the city; the Gateshead Millenium Bridge in Newcastle; British beaches are best enjoyed with classic fish and chips

Get on board

P&O Cruises' 16-night British Isles cruise aboard *Aurora*, return from Southampton via Cobh, Dunmore, Liverpool, Belfast, Greenock, Kirkwall, Newhaven and Newcastle, departs 22 July 2026, from £1,599pp.

[pocruises.com](https://www.pocruises.com)



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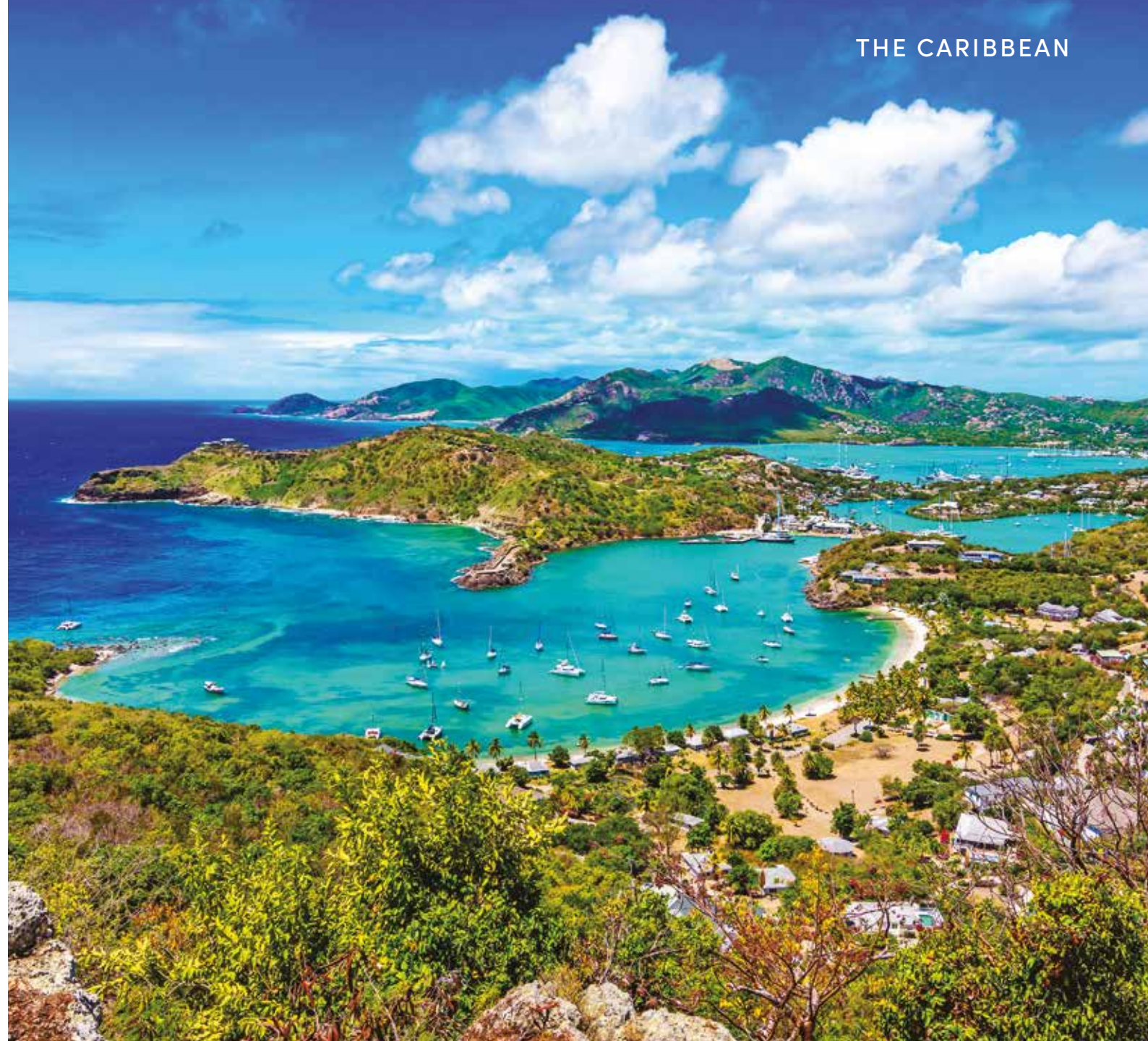
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CARIBBEAN

Powder-white sands and sweeping rainforests cement the Caribbean as one of the world's most popular cruise destinations, where vibrant cultures, turquoise waters and laid-back island life create a paradise ripe for exploration



The Caribbean needs little introduction. Sands whiter than freshly laundered linen and 25°C seas in uncountable hues of blue are guaranteed on every cruise. Yet, there is so much more to this part of the world than the beach. Passengers who leave the coast behind will be rewarded by multi-storey waterfalls, frond-filled rainforests, cinnamon and clove-scented spice fields, cocoa plantations, rum distilleries, and even stalactite-spiked underground caves.

FALMOUTH

Some of Jamaica's most famous sights satellite Falmouth, on Jamaica's north coast. The Martha Brae River, where visitors can ride bamboo rafts through scarab green waters, is less than five



kilometres away. Dunn's River Falls with its staircase-shaped waterfall can be reached within an hour. It's a similar distance to the tubing rapids of Ocho Rios and its Blue Hole mineral spring bathing spot. There's also a string of beach options nearby, all delivering pina colada-coloured sands and balmy seas.

GRENADA

The rhyme "sugar and spice and all things nice" could have been written about Grenada. This eastern Caribbean island produces world-leading spices, chocolate and sugar cane rums. Shore excursions take visitors to places like Laura Herb & Spice Garden and Jouvay Chocolate to see how cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, paprika, vanilla, turmeric and cocoa beans are grown. Most itineraries are also peppered with stops at natural wonders like the 65-foot Concord Waterfall and palm-backed Grand Anse Beach.



How to sell

"The Caribbean is one of the world's favourite cruise destinations, thanks to its breathtaking natural beauty. Offering a blend of relaxation and adventure, it appeals to a variety of travellers from couples looking for a romantic getaway to multi-generational families. With Crystal, guests will discover destinations such as Barbados, Jamaica and St Martin as well as the lesser-visited islands of St Barts, Martinique and Montserrat while immersing themselves in the pulsing culture, learning about the region's history and even coming face to face with wildlife of all shapes and sizes, such as playful monkeys and sleepy sloths in Honduras"

Luke Smith, vice president trade sales UK & EMEA, Crystal

Don't miss

Passengers who have pre- or post-cruise time in the port of Galveston can take a not so giant leap to NASA's Space Centre in Houston, a half hour drive away. There are more than 400 space artefacts on display here, as well as interactive displays and a series of regularly changing exhibitions.

CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT Bridgetown's enchanting pastel shades; Miami is perfect for a pre- or post-cruise stay; architecture aficionados will enjoy the Art Deco buildings flanking Miami's beaches; shore excursions in Grenada give visitors the chance to learn all about spice and cocoa production

BRIDGETOWN

Starring on southern Caribbean itineraries, Bridgetown is the pastel-painted capital of Barbados. There's plenty to occupy visitors in the city itself, not least the UNESCO World Heritage Old Town and Garrison, which are best appreciated through a guided tour. Visitors who leave its limits, however, have their pick of more than 80 beaches, foodie sights like Haymans Market, and natural highlights such as Barbados Wildlife Reserve, which dozens of Barbados green monkeys call home.

MIAMI

They don't call Miami the "Cruise Capital of the World" for nothing. There's so much to cram in in this city that it calls out for a pre- or post-cruise stay. Sunbathing on the quilt-soft sands of nine-mile-long South Beach, touring the Art Deco buildings that flank the sand, going on a street art crawl in the Wynwood district, or spree shopping around the city's multiple malls are just the start of the long list of things to do in The Magic City. ●

Get on board

Crystal's 17-night The Americas & Caribbean cruise aboard *Crystal Symphony*, return from Fort Lauderdale via the British Virgin Islands, French West Indies, St Vincent, St Lucia, Martinique, St Kitts and Nevis, Puerto Rico and St Martin, departs 3 December 2026, from £6,400pp. [crystalcruises.com](https://www.crystalcruises.com)



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Central **AMERICA**

With locations like the Panama Canal, Mexico's Cozumel and the Puerto Lima rainforest, cruisers seeking an exhilarating tropical adventure needn't look any further



Central America cruises course through Panama, Costa Rica, Honduras and British-speaking Belize, with popular embarkation ports including Miami, San Diego, and Tampa, Florida. Ziplining between the tower-block-tall trees of rainforests, showering in waterfall spouts, hiking amongst the ruins of pre-BC Mayan civilisations, and tequila tasting in agave plantations with rust red soils are all part of itineraries here. For the ultimate experience in this region, passengers should book a sailing that includes a transit of the region's serpentine canal.

“ The corals harbour over 1,000 marine species, prime scuba and snorkel spots

PANAMA CANAL

Streaking through Panama for 51 miles, the Panama Canal is one of the greatest feats of 20th-century engineering. It took 75,000 people 33 years to complete it; today, cruisers can cross it in a single effortless day. During transit, passengers

can watch as 52 million gallons of water surges in and out of the canal's powerful locks, raising 250,000 tonne ships 26 metres above sea level, and coast through the sloe-berry-blue waters of the Gatun Lake, as herons, kingfishers and ospreys glide through the skies above.

COZUMEL, MEXICO

Overlooking the east coast of Mexico, Cozumel island is hemmed in by baking-soda white beaches, backed by palms. Its interior, meanwhile, is blanketed by mangrove forests, interrupted here and



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Visitors to Cozumel won't want to go anywhere else; make the most of the abundant fresh produce; the Panama Canal is one of the 20th century's greatest engineering feats

Don't miss

Customers who disembark their Central America cruise in Miami should seek out On Ocean 7 cafe in South Beach. Serving chalice-sized cocktails and piled high plates of tacos, ribs and shrimp wraps, it's the perfect place for a long lunch before heading home.

there by the ruins of Mayan villages and natural swimming spots called cenotes. A few flipper kicks off shore, visitors will find the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System, which at 1,000 kilometres long is the second largest reef in the world. The corals here harbour more than 1,000 different marine species, from docile nurse sharks and loggerhead turtles to brightly striped parrotfish and rust-red lobsters, and are prime snorkel and scuba spots.

PUERTO LIMON, COSTA RICA

The countryside beyond Puerto Limon is cloaked in rainforest. Thicketed with towering palms and 30-foot tree ferns, the 200 acre Veragua forest reserve is the best place for cruise



How to sell

"Central America is a region of contrasts, offering clients an enticing combination of cities, pristine beaches and lush rainforests. The best time to cruise is during the dry season, from November to April, when weather conditions are at their most comfortable and reliable. Princess Cruises is one of the region's standout cruise lines, combining iconic experiences like transiting the Panama Canal with lesser-known ports including Roatan and Puerto Limon. Encourage clients to embrace the region's diversity with experiences such as exploring ancient Mayan sites in Belize or spotting wildlife in Costa Rica, which are perfect for those seeking authentic, discovery-led cruising."

Michael Wilson, managing director, Bolsover Cruise Club

passengers to get out into it. Zip wires drape through the trees here. Walking trails lead to spots where rockfaces weep 60-foot waterfalls. Plus, there's a sky gondola that glides through the canopy, giving visitors the opportunity to spot some 400 species of birds, 585 types of butterfly, and more than 100 mammals – including sleepy sloths and rowdy-sounding howler monkeys.

HUATULCO, MEXICO

Santa Cruz Bay and Huatulco are the gateway to Mexico's Oaxaca region, with its tortilla-coloured beaches, mezcal plantations, and handcraft artisans who produce everything from woollen rugs to woven palm products. Those who prefer white knuckle activities to white sand ones can book a rafting excursion to the Copalita River, where the Class 2 rapids are set against a backdrop of the Sierra Madre mountains. However clients spend their days, they should make time to try some traditional mole, a rich sauce made from spices and toasted local chillies and at times, cocoa. 🍷

Get on board

A ten-night Panama Canal Westward Cruise aboard *Serenade of the Seas*, return from Colón (Panama), Panama Canal, Puntarenas (Costa Rica), Huatulco (Mexico), Puerto Vallarta (Mexico) and Los Angeles (California) departs on 25 April 2026, from £995pp. royalcaribbean.com





Far East & **SOUTHEAST ASIA**

Spicy scents and vivid night markets are just some of the experiences awaiting travellers in this eclectic cruising favourite

Introduce clients to a land of terraced rice fields, incense-scented shrines, thickly knitted rainforests and skyscraper-skewed capital cities. A place where days involve tip-toeing through temples, travelling by tuk tuk and spooning through bowls of chili-spiced noodles in animated night markets. Itineraries take in the likes of China, Japan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam, with popular embarkation ports including Hong Kong, Tokyo, Bangkok and Bali.

BALI

Known as the Island of a Thousand Temples, Bali has Hindu sanctuaries on clifftops, in rainforests and in the sea. Some are guarded by sacred monkeys, others are engulfed by gardens and water features. Between them, they have



Don't miss

You can't say you've experienced Singapore until you've had a drink at Raffles' two-storey, wood-panelled Long Bar. It's here that Singapore's national drink, the Singapore Sling, was first mixed back in 1915, and it's still served here today.



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Bali, the Island of a Thousand Temples; Beppu's world-famous hot springs; nasi goreng is one of the many irresistible dishes on offer at street food stalls throughout Indonesia

tropical fruit farms of Rayong. Book clients onto an itinerary that stays in the city overnight so they can immerse themselves in the neon-lit night markets with their miles of noodle soup, sticky rice and pad Thai stalls.

HA LONG BAY

UNESCO-protected Ha Long Bay is strewn with almost 2,000 limestone islands, whittled into shape by wind, sea water and tropical rain showers over the course of 500 million years. Some of the karst rocks are tower-block tall, others inch out of the water like dorsal fins. The best way to see this natural sculpture park is by traditional wooden junk boat with a wooden hull and bedsheet-sized sails. More active passengers can book excursions that include time kayaking around the islands, paddling in and out of caves en route.

BEPPU

Peering out over Beppu Bay in the west of the country, Beppu is known as the hot spring capital of Japan. More than 2,500 of these 'onsen' expel around 130,000 tonnes of water a day across the region. Some of the springs have been tamed into spa-like bathing facilities with open air pools. Others are far too hot, at up to 100°C, but cruise passengers can still visit them to see the spectacle of the heat and to try pudding, corn and eggs cooked on the steam. 🍷

Get on board

Viking's 14-night Southeast Asia & Hong Kong itinerary aboard *Viking Venus*, from Bangkok to Hong Kong via Sihanoukville, Ho Chi Minh City, Hue, Ha Long Bay departs on 8 April 2026, from £6,090pp. [viking.com](https://www.viking.com)



How to sell

"It is important to appreciate the sheer scale and diversity of Southeast Asia — even a 28-day luxury cruise can only begin to explore the region's remarkable cultures and landscapes. For this reason, we typically recommend focusing on one curated itinerary at a time: perhaps an itinerary centred around Japan and South Korea or Taiwan, followed by a separate voyage covering the highlights of Hong Kong, Vietnam, Singapore and the Philippines. This approach allows for a more enriching and immersive experience, including land stays, ensuring each destination is given the attention it truly deserves."

Stefan Shillito, managing director of The Sovereign Cruise Club



Tip-toe through temples, tour by tuk tuk and relish the lively night-markets

multi-tier Meru roofs, meticulously carved interiors, and one even has a moat. Find clients an itinerary that includes an overnight in Bali, and they'll be able to watch the sunset from one of these hallowed spots. Or they can book onto an authentic Indonesian dinner followed by a traditional Kecak dance performance, which is a popular choice of excursion.

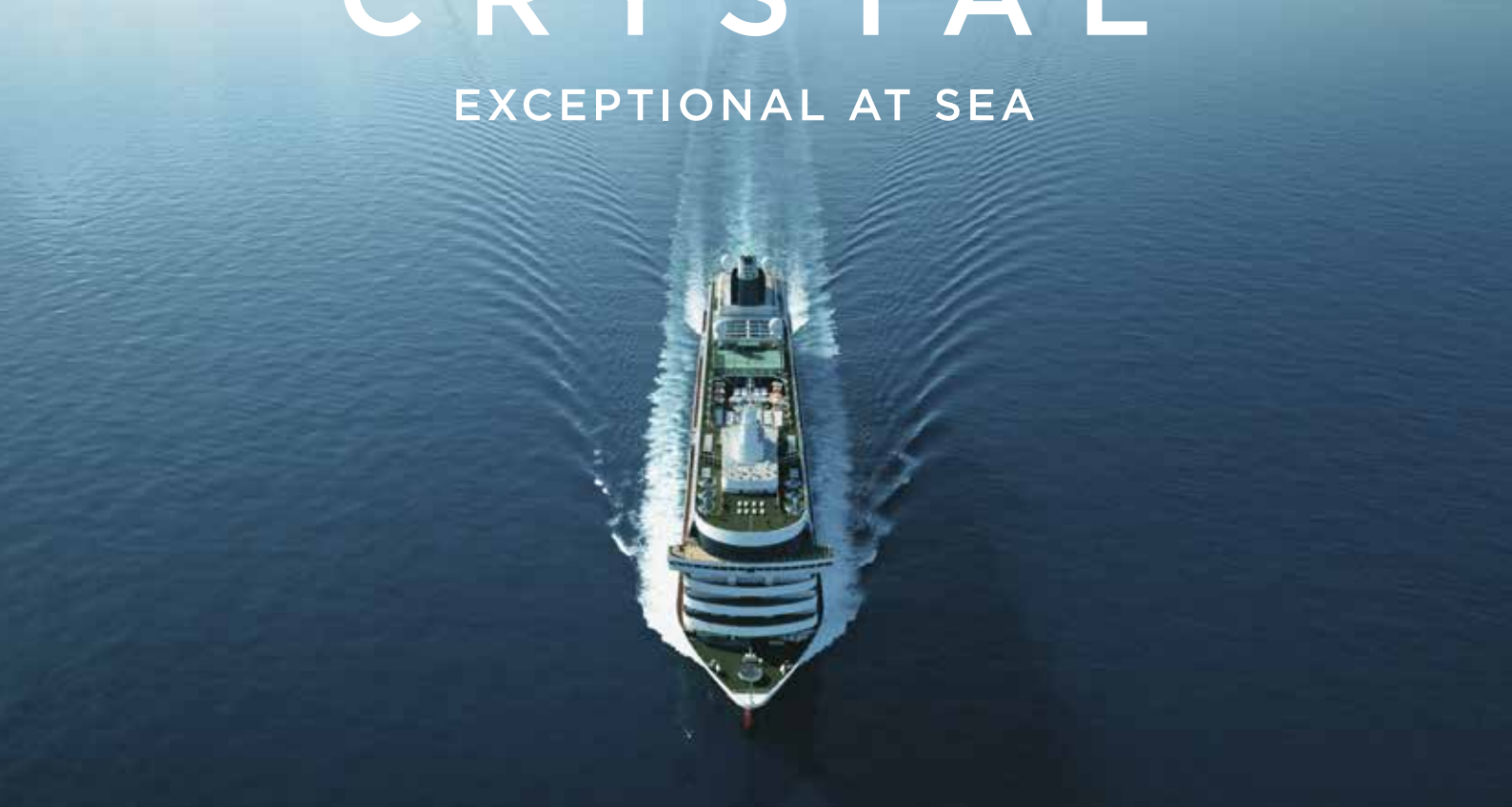
BANGKOK

The ever-on city of Bangkok crams in ancient temples, multi-tonne Buddha statues, technicolour flower markets and hundred-metre-tall skyscrapers topped with skywalks. Just beyond the capital, there are sights like the honey-hued beaches of Pattaya, the cliff-top Sanctuary of Truth temple, and the



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MEDITERRANEAN

Sun-kissed beaches, imposing ruins and inimitable islands make the mighty Med a must-visit for every cruise goer, a region where ancient history, world-class cuisine and crystal-clear waters come together in unforgettable style



Mediterranean cruises place passengers in some of Europe's longest-lived cities, promising landmarks that have been standing since the time of Aristotle and Julius Caesar, as well as structures so significant they are protected as UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Cruises to this region tend to be split into eastern and western itineraries with the former taking in destinations like Venice, Dubrovnik and Greece, and the latter sailing through Barcelona, Valencia, Rome, the south of France and Sardinia.



The landmarks have been standing since the time of Aristotle and Julius Caesar

CIVITAVECCHIA FOR ROME

Rome's 'Eternal City' has an eternal to-do list to match. Cruise passengers can scale the Spanish Steps; circle the Colosseum; throw a coin in the Trevi Fountain; pad around the Roman Forum; tour the Pantheon; burrow through the catacombs; inch a hand into the Mouth of Truth; and crick their neck trying to get the best view of Michelangelo's ceiling-filling frescoes in the Vatican's Sistine Chapel, and still have only skimmed the surface.

ATHENS

Greece's capital feels like a set from a Ridley Scott or Christopher Nolan film. Not just at its hilltop Acropolis, with its columned Parthenon and UNESCO World Heritage listing, but on practically every street corner, where visitors will stumble across ancient libraries, marketplaces and porticoes. Repeat cruisers may want to mix things up with a day trip to Cape Sounion, at the tip of the Attica Peninsula, where another temple crests an imposing clifftop overlooking the Aegean Sea.

MARSEILLE

As well as being France's oldest city, Marseille is the gateway to Provence. In this part of the French Riviera, the countryside is corrugated with vineyards, specialising in blush and rose wines, and crowned with chateaus or wine making estates where visitors can take part in

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Rome's famous sites include the Spanish Steps and the Colosseum; enjoy the variety on offer in Livorno's central market; indulge in France's exquisite seafood selections in Marseille



How to sell

"The Mediterranean offers a fantastic blend of history, culture, cuisine and beautiful coastlines. Western itineraries visit historical cities such as Rome, Barcelona and Naples, as well as the stunning Italian and French rivieras, while Eastern sailings take in the Greek islands with their ancient sites and sunny beaches. Whether you want to explore ancient ruins and historic cities or simply soak up the vibrant local life, the Mediterranean has it all. On a Crystal cruise you can even enjoy an after-hours visit to Rome's Sistine Chapel, a farm-to-table experience with a local family in Tuscany or a grandstand view at the Monaco Grand Prix."

Luke Smith, vice president trade sales UK & EMEA, Crystal

Don't miss

Pompeii, accessible from the port of Naples, is constantly evolving. In 2025, a new bathhouse was uncovered, with archaeologists calling it "the find of the century". There are remains of more than 60 houses, gardens, temples, gates, sanctuaries, bathhouses and shops to explore.



tours and tastings. Provence's olive oil is as worthy of tasting as its wines. Advise clients to visit between late June and early August and they'll be able to catch Provence's lavender fields in their royal purple bloom.

LIVORNO

This western Italian port is the springboard to Tuscany. Pisa, with its tipsily tilting tower, is less than an hour away. Florence and its dome-capped marble cathedral, meanwhile, can be reached in a further 30 minutes. Food-based excursions are also popular in this part of the country, with tours taking passengers into farmhouses for long agriturismo lunches and to artisan pasta factories. 🍷

Get on board

A 31-night Classical Mediterranean cruise aboard *Ambition*, return from London Cruise Terminal via Leixoes, Cadiz, Malaga, Palma de Mallorca, Barcelona, Livorno, Civitavecchia, Naples, Palermo, Trapani, Valetta, La Goulette, Cagliari, Valencia, Alicante, Lisbon, Santander, Le Verdon and Honfleur, on 19 February 2026, from £1,999pp. ambassadorcruiseline.com



Middle EAST

Sports tourism may draw cruisers to the Middle East, but beyond F1 and boxing, Gulf cities brim with culture and soul



DUBAI

This glittering metropolis has long cemented its reputation as a winter-sun favourite for British travellers, thanks to its reliably balmy weather between November and February. Beyond the towering skyline, swanky hotels and Michelin-starred restaurants lies Deira, the city's historic heart, where time slows among the narrow lanes of the Spice Souk and Gold Souk. A traditional abra ride across Dubai Creek offers a glimpse of old Dubai, while a visit to the Al Fahidi Fort which houses the Dubai Museum reveals the emirate's transformation from a humble fishing village to a trading port and now a global powerhouse.

MUSCAT

Ask anyone who has visited this Omani capital and they'll tell you how underrated and captivating it is, especially its hospitality, culture and gastronomy. Unlike many cities in the Middle East, Muscat's skyline is defined not by high-rises, but by domes and minarets, with landmarks such as the magnificent Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque and the elegant Royal Opera House setting the tone. Travellers can browse for frankincense and silverware at the Mutrah Souq, then dive into Omani history at the National Museum or Bait Al Zubair before ending their visit with the catch of the day for an early dinner by the seafront.

RAS AL-KHAIMAH

Often overlooked in comparison to its shiny Emirati sisters, Ras Al-Khaimah offers an unspoilt glimpse into the Arabian Desert and its bordering Hajar mountains. Visitors can take in panoramic views from Jebel Jais, the UAE's highest peak and currently home to the world's longest zipline, or make this a pre- or post-cruise destination where you can stay overnight and have a barbecue as you camp beneath star-studded skies for a nocturnal desert adventure. It's a quieter, more soulful alternative to the urban energy of Dubai and Abu Dhabi.



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1[^], 11[^], 20, 21[^] FEB; 3[^], 13[^] MAR 2027

Roundtrip Buenos Aires SEABOURN VENTURE SEABOURN PURSUIT[^]

VISITS: Fly Buenos Aires/Ushuaia;
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14-Day Exotic Caribbean in Depth

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9, 23 JAN, 13, 27 FEB; 13 MAR 2027

Roundtrip Barbados SEABOURN OVATION

VISITS: Castries (St Lucia); Little Bay (Montserrat);
St John's Antigua; Carambola Beach[^] (St Kitts &
Nevis); Great Harbour Philipsburg (St Maarten);
Soper's Hole (Frenchman's Cay); Carambola
Beach[^]; Trois Ilets (Martinique); Port Elizabeth
(Bequia); St Georges (Grenada); Barbados.

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18 JAN; 1[~], 15 FEB, 21 DEC~ 2026;
4 JAN; 1 FEB~ 2027

Hong Kong to Singapore (or reverse~) SEABOURN ENCORE

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Da Nang (Hue); Ho Chi Minh City
(Saigon, overnight); Sihanoukville (Cambodia);
Ko Kood[^] (Thailand); Laem Chabang (Bangkok);
Singapore.

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North AMERICA

From jazz-filled streets to the iconic bayou, North America offers cruise guests an immersive mix of culture, history and gastronomy. **Rashmi Narayan** chats with New Orleans & Company's Diana Hernandez on why this city is a must-visit on a cruise across the pond in 2026

You don't need to travel across the States on an epic road trip to discover unique experiences – sometimes they're at the end of the gangway. In New Orleans, guests can step off the ship and instantly be immersed in a city alive with music, cuisine, history and architectural marvels. Cruises calling at the Port of New Orleans allow visitors to explore world-renowned districts like the French Quarter and the Garden District, ride the city's iconic streetcars and enjoy some Sazerac, Voodoo culture, museums, festivals and culinary delights that showcase the region's rich heritage.

Championing the city as a premier cruise destination is New Orleans & Company, which works closely with Explore Louisiana as well as homeports and operators to ensure



passengers experience both the city and the wider state of Louisiana. Here, Diana Hernandez highlights how cruise visitors can make the most of their time in this uniquely American city, whether they have a few hours or several days to explore.

What should agents focus on when selling New Orleans?

My number one message is that there's so much to New Orleans and the state of Louisiana beyond Bourbon Street. Of course, visitors must see Bourbon Street – there's nothing else like it – but beyond the French Quarter and the architecture, there's so much richness. If you go just a little outside the

city, like to Tremé, where we constantly hold festivals in Congo Square, that's truly the birthplace of music, where Louis Armstrong started learning his craft. Then there's the Garden District, home to famous residents like Anne Rice, Sandra Bullock and John Goodman. After Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans really became Hollywood South; you can see stunning antebellum and post-war architecture with those beautiful wrought-iron balconies and gates.

How important is cruise to New Orleans and Louisiana?

Cruising is absolutely vital to New Orleans' economy. We're one of the top homeports in the United States, and what makes us unique is how well cruising ties into the city itself. From the port, visitors can walk straight into our neighbourhoods, hop on a historic streetcar or spend the day exploring museums, music venues and local restaurants. It's not just a stopover, it's a gateway. Many cruise lines, from Norwegian and Carnival



to American Cruise Lines on the river, help extend that experience into Louisiana's Cajun country, River Parishes, the bayou and beyond.

How can visitors make the most of their time in New Orleans?

We're proud to be a major port city with a melting pot of cultures you can taste. There are several cooking class options. The New Orleans School of Cooking offers everything from casual drop-in demonstrations, where you can

“We're proud to be a major port city with a melting pot of cultures you can taste



watch, learn and sample dishes, to longer hands-on sessions. There's also the Mardi Gras School of Cooking which holds three-hour classes three times a day, where you cook alongside a professional chef and learn the story behind each dish.

New Orleans has also recently been named a UNESCO World City of Music. It's something we've been working toward for more than three years, highlighting our heritage as the birthplace of jazz. But we're also telling the story of how jazz evolved into rock and roll.

How will New Orleans attract more cruise guests in 2026?

Many cruise itineraries often include Oak Alley Plantation, Cajun Swamp Tours

North America Highlights

ALASKA

The vast wilderness of Alaska remains one of the most awe-inspiring cruise destinations in the world. Its glacial scenery, teeming wildlife and crisp northern air make every sailing an unforgettable experience. Ships glide past dramatic fjords and iceberg-studded waters, with ports such as Juneau, Ketchikan and Skagway offering a gateway to adventure. Travellers can pan for gold, take a seaplane over Misty Fjords, or watch humpback whales breach against a backdrop of snow-capped peaks. Even brief calls allow guests to soak up local culture.

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA

The sound of seagulls and the fresh Atlantic breeze greet guests as they arrive in Halifax, Nova Scotia, one of Canada's most prominent cruise ports. Steeped in maritime history, the city is a gateway to the scenic beauty of the Canadian Maritimes. Visitors can explore the

Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, where the story of the Titanic and Halifax's rich naval heritage comes alive, or stroll along the historic waterfront boardwalk, dotted with shops, cafes and craft markets. For a touch of local flavour, travellers can try fresh seafood like lobster rolls or Digby scallops, experiencing a true taste of Nova Scotia.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Cruise passengers arriving in Los Angeles step into a city where glamour meets diverse culture. As the gateway to Southern California, the port offers iconic sights even in a single day's visit. From the star-studded streets of Hollywood to the scenic views from Griffith Observatory, there's something for everyone. Art lovers can explore the Getty Center, while epicureans can wander through the brand new Maydan Market for a taste of dishes like tlayudas. Whether it's a quick city tour or a pre- or post-cruise adventure, LA offers a dynamic mix of entertainment, history and coastal charm that leaves a lasting impression.



and Whitney Plantation, among others beyond the city, which in itself can be attractive to cruise passengers beyond New Orleans and Mardi Gras. Every December, we have a unique Christmas Eve tradition in Louisiana called Bonfires on the Levee, a long-standing local tradition where residents build bonfires along the Mississippi River starting in late November. They're lit all at once on Christmas Eve at 7pm to guide Papa Noël (Cajun Santa Claus). It's magical. This year I'm sure we'll see Beyoncé and Taylor Swift-themed bonfires! ●

CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT

The inimitable buildings of New Orleans; Alaska is teeming with wildlife; Nova Scotia is the gateway to the Canadian Maritimes

Get on board

Royal Caribbean International's seven-night Western Caribbean cruise aboard *Mariner of the Seas*, round-trip from New Orleans via Cozumel (Mexico), George Town (Grand Cayman) and Falmouth (Jamaica), departs 28 November 2026, from £502pp. royalcaribbean.com

CRAFTED FOR THE CURIOUS

For Atlas Ocean Voyages, cruising isn't just about visiting a destination. It's about unlocking a feeling of endless wonder within every onboard explorer

When Atlas Ocean Voyages was founded in 2019, its mission was clear: to lead the luxury expedition market with a range of unique experiences designed to bring a destination to life, both onboard and ashore.

Cruising with Atlas gives travellers a sense of immersion like no other holiday. Split across three pillars – Polar, Epicurean and Cultural – the line offers a rich tapestry of experiences suited to everyone.

Here, we look at what each category has to offer to help you pair the right Atlas adventure with the right consumer.

POLAR EXPEDITIONS

A staple of any expedition cruise line worth their salt is a robust polar expedition cruising programme. With Atlas, guests can explore the Arctic Circle, Greenland and Iceland, the southern glaciers of South America or the shores of Antarctica, only accessible to polar-class vessels like Atlas's fleet, which are



“Cruising with Atlas gives travellers a sense of immersion like no other holiday

equipped with Zodiacs and staffed with experts to inform and guide adventurers.

Included in every cruise are the line's range of immersive experiences, such as a trip to the soaring mountains and crystalline lakes of Tierra del Fuego National Park, or the chance to sip pisco sour and tuck into lamb al asador during a local dining experience in Punta Arenas. Pair this with Zodiac safaris, shore landings, sea kayaking and Antarctic camping, and guests will be hard pressed to travel with anyone else.

EPICUREAN EXPEDITIONS

For guests who prefer a warmer climate, Atlas also offers a series of Epicurean expeditions. Guests can explore the historic, artistic and natural wonders of the Mediterranean accompanied by chefs, vintners and other culinarians who illuminate the region through the lens of food and wine, sharing their skills onboard and ashore.

Immersive experiences include a tour of Barcelona's architectural marvels after a funicular ride up Montjuic, which is rounded off with a hearty plate of locally prepared paella, or an evening of wine and canopies in Kotor's fairytale-like 18th-century church. In Greece, guests can travel to Olympia, where ruins perch on the site of the inaugural Olympic Games.



CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT Antarctica excursions are one of Atlas's specialities; guests can go shopping for their dinner in Barcelona with chefs

CULTURAL EXPEDITIONS

One of cruise's strongest selling points is its ability to bring travellers closer to the heart of a destination. With Atlas's range of Cultural expeditions, guests can engage with communities, explore cultural icons and marvel at natural beauty with local experts in the Caribbean, South America, Northern Europe and beyond.

Cultural insights are available closer to home, too. In Liverpool, a conversation with a Beatles ultra-fan and a rousing performance of the Fab Four's greatest hits by a cover band will have your guests tapping their feet. Further afield in Rio, guests can don flamboyant Carnival-inspired costumes and make their own masks before putting their skills to the test in an onboard dance workshop. ●



For more information, visit
atlasoceanvoyagesuk.com

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South America & ANTARCTICA

From the bouncing streets of Rio de Janeiro to the pristine white desert of Antarctica, this part of the world has enough to keep travellers of all kind happy

“

The Galápagos Islands are home to wildlife that can't be found anywhere else on earth

Spanning more than 30 million square kilometres, South America and Antarctica offer an equator-long list of cruise itineraries. Sailings place passengers everywhere from the high energy cities of Rio and Buenos Aires to the unpeopled ice-encrusted lands at the end of the world. Wildlife experiences are deeply embedded into cruises in this part of the world, from whale watching and dolphin spotting to swimming with seals and sea lions.

DRAKE PASSAGE

Cruising the Drake Passage is the most intrepid way to reach Antarctica. Crossing it, passengers will encounter ice floes, albatross, petrels, and up to 15 different types of whales and dolphins. Cruises take up to two days, depending on the weather, and conditions can be choppy, but it all adds to the adventure. Sell clients mid-ship cabins, so they'll feel less movement, and point them to ships with x-bow fronts, which help vessels cut through the waves, and with stabilisers for smoother journeys.



Don't miss

From Buenos Aires, cruise passengers can take shore excursions to traditional cattle ranches known as 'estancias' to get a feel for how Argentina's gauchos live. Visitors can watch horsemanship displays, listen to traditional music and tuck in to steak, chorizo and chicken dishes cooked on the asado (barbecue).

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Rio de Janeiro is renowned for its Carnival and its Christ the Redeemer statue; South America's landscapes are truly breathtaking; Bird Island in the Beagle Channel is a haven for wildlife

train', which winds its way through Tierra del Fuego National Park, with its beech forests, rivers and snow-capped mountain scenery. Or passengers can take catamaran cruises out into the Beagle Channel that fronts the city to spot wildlife such as cormorants and sea lions. For golf lovers, there's even a 'golf course at the end of the world' to play.

ELEPHANT ISLAND

Shaped like an elephant's head and tusk viewed from the side, Elephant Island sits in the Scotia Sea at the north-northeast tip of the Antarctic Peninsula. This place is elephantine in stature as well as shape, with ice-slicked mountains towering over it. Between November and March, the island is probably best defined by another animal, as thousands of tuxedo-patterned chinstrap, gentoo and macaroni penguins converge there to mate. Guests will also have the chance to spot fin whales and humpbacks in the waters that pool around the island. ●

Get on board

HX Expeditions' 12-night Highlights of Antarctica cruise aboard *MS Fridtjof Nansen* or *MS Roald Amundsen*, roundtrip from Buenos Aires with flights to and from Ushuaia included, departs on selected dates from £7,607pp (excluding international flights).

travelhx.com



How to sell

"The perfect destination for the UK's winter months, South America and Antarctica offer an incredible variety of experiences. From iconic beaches to snowy Antarctic itineraries, there is a wealth of choice, with many cruise lines operating in the region and both expedition and classic cruising options available. January is considered the best time to witness wildlife in Antarctica, while February brings the vibrant Carnival in Rio de Janeiro. While iconic sites such as Machu Picchu often steal the spotlight, the region has so much to discover - from the cloud forests of Ecuador to the Pantanal in Brazil."

Alexander Loizou, director of sales and marketing, Mundy Cruising

GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS

Freckling the Pacific Ocean, 600 miles off the coast of Ecuador, the Galápagos Islands are home to wildlife that can't be found anywhere else on earth. It's this fact that earned the archipelago UNESCO World Heritage status in the 1970s. Amongst the lavascapes, lagoons and beaches here, cruisers will be able to catch sight of half-tonne tortoises, Mohican-headed iguanas, blue footed boobies, pink flamingos, sea turtles and Galapagos hawks which have wingspans of up to 120cm. Cruises here involve close encounters with these animals, offering opportunities like swimming with sea lions and kayaking amongst pods of dolphins.

USHUAIA

Perched on the tip of South America, Ushuaia is the world's most southern city. Popular cruise excursions include riding the 'end of the world

A woman with short brown hair and glasses, wearing a colorful floral halter top and a matching wrap skirt, is smiling and holding a glass of red drink. She is standing next to a green wooden post decorated with various colorful painted signs, including 'STUSSIE', 'FEU', 'BRAZIL', and 'STUSSIE'. The background shows a tropical landscape with green foliage and a clear blue sky.

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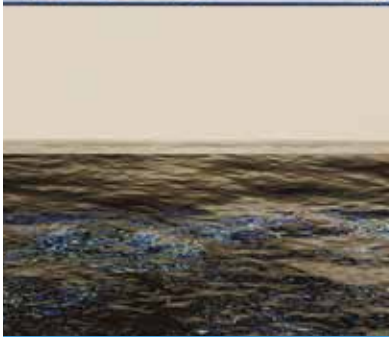


NEW OCEAN SHIPS



A NEW DAWN

The ships are coming in both literally and figuratively in 2026, with next year's wave of new cruise vessels bringing everything to the high seas from the longest ever slide to Champagne and caviar bars, writes **Sarah Holt**





STAR SEEKER

Launching: December 2025

Windstar Cruises' first ever Star class new build will flaunt 112 suites, including two new cabin categories – Horizon Suites, which come with wrap-around balconies, and Infinity Suites with floor-to-ceiling windows that slide down halfway. The line-up of onboard lures also includes five included restaurants, a spa, a skylight-lightened yacht club, lounge, and a watersports platform that allows direct access to the sea. Following its maiden voyage from Malaga to Miami, *Star Seeker* will flit from the Caribbean to Central America, Alaska, and then across the Pacific to Japan.

VIKING MIRA

Launching: March 2026

Mira will be the latest sibling in Viking's brood of small ocean ships. Like its 12 sisters, it'll be an all-veranda vessel that totes the line's trademark Scandinavian interior designs. With 499 staterooms, hosting up to 998 passengers, *Mira* will feature all the communal spaces Viking passengers have become familiar with, from Manfredi's Italian restaurant to The Nordic Spa. Its inaugural season will see it chart a course around the Mediterranean and Northern Europe, on itineraries that range from Italian Sojourn (Rome to Venice) to British Isles Explorer (Bergen to London Tilbury).

NORWEGIAN LUNA

Launching: March 2026

As twin sister to *Norwegian Aqua*, Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL)'s *Luna* will deliver all the latest Prima class features. Outdoor areas will include two daybed bedecked Infinity Beach relaxation spaces with infinity pools, the glass-bottomed, over-water Oceanwalk skybridge, and the hybrid roller coaster/waterslide Aqua Slidecoaster. Inside, meanwhile, highlights range from the dual-purpose sports-court-come-lounge, Glow Court, with its LED floor, to the second iteration of NCL's first plant-based restaurant Planterie. After making its maiden voyage from Rome to Miami,

“New cabin concepts, enticing entertainment and fantastic food and relaxation zones are all on the horizon

the 3,550-passenger ship will cruise the Bahamas and Caribbean before offering roundtrip New York itineraries in 2027.

FOUR SEASONS 1

Launching: March 2026

The first yacht from the Four Seasons hotel brand brings high class to the high seas. A total of 95 suites await passengers on this 14-deck vessel, with the standard room specs promising walk-in wardrobes, floor-to-ceiling windows, and terraces, whilst the plushiest suites deliver private pools and outdoor gyms. Between exploring ports of call like Göcek in Turkey and the French Riviera, passengers will be able to enjoy 11 restaurants and lounges, including a Champagne and caviar bar, a spa with thermal circuit and cryotherapy suite, and a theatre.

LEGEND OF THE SEAS

Launching: July 2026

Offering the most dining options at sea is the first way in which *Legend of The Seas* aims to live up to its name. There will be 28 culinary venues and experiences onboard, including the new Hollywood

Supper Club, where cinema-inspired menus will be served with a side of jazz. The food theme trickles into Legend's theatre line-up, as hit Broadway musical *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* makes its at-sea debut. Plus, as Royal Caribbean's third Icon class ship, *Legend* will feature the best-loved bits of sisters *Icon* and *Star*, including their six-slide waterparks and septet of pools. The ship will spend its first season sailing the Western Med before it glides over to the Western and Southern Caribbean for winter 2026.

EXPLORA III

Launching: July 2026

Fractionally bigger than *Explora I* and *II*, this triplet ship features 463 suites and a greater proportion of higher suite categories like Ocean Penthouses and Ocean Residences than before. *Explora III*'s big boast is that it will offer one of the highest proportions of public space per guest, with its communal areas encompassing six eateries, five pools, 12 bars and lounges, and – new for *Explora III* – an expanded wellness and fitness area. The ship's first sailings will spirit passengers around Italy, Portugal and Spain, before it slinks off to the Norwegian fjords and the Baltics.



CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT *Seven Seas Prestige*'s atrium features twin spiral staircases; *Explora III* has an expanded wellness area; *Norwegian Luna*'s Game Zone; *Four Seasons 1* launches in March

MSC WORLD ASIA

Launching: December 2026

MSC's newest flagship will bring its own subtle twist to the line's World Class concept, which sees ships split into seven districts. *World Asia* will add a new pan Asian eatery, bar and terrace to the tried and tested World Promenade dining and socialising area. There will be a new retro-themed Clubhouse where families can get together for daytime and night-time entertainment. Plus, the 6,758-passenger ship will introduce a longer dry slide, which at 12 decks tall will be the longest at sea. While the vessel will be 'Asia' by name, it will start out being Mediterranean by nature, spending its first winter and summer in the Med.

SEVEN SEAS PRESTIGE

Launching: December 2026

With *Seven Seas Prestige*, Regent Seven Seas launches its first new class of ship in a decade. Passengers can expect décor inspired by the Renaissance, twin spiral staircases in the Atrium, and new suite categories that include two-storey Skyview Suites, which come with private rooftop terraces and in-suite elevators. A new mezze-style Mediterranean restaurant will also make its debut on this 411-suite ship, plumping the number of specialty dining options up to seven. *Seven Seas Prestige* will spend winter sailing around Miami, the Caribbean, Puerto Rico, Mexico and LA, before it crosses back to Europe and the likes of Barcelona, Lisbon, Rome and Venice for summer 2027. ●

