

cruise

TRADE NEWS

CRYSTAL CLEAR

Interview with Crystal Cruises'
Helen Beck

NEW TO
CRUISE
Cruise & Stay

DESTINATION FOCUS

Cuba and the Caribbean

RIVER FOCUS

Make your
way along the
Mekong and
Irrawaddy

PLUS

Your pull-out and keep at-a-
glance guide to TUI Discovery
- pages 26-27

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020 7399 7601 www.crystalcruises.co.uk

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editor's letter



What a stormy couple of months we've had - politically I mean - and the ship is still rocking. There's been a lot of uncertainty around the cruise industry since the vote for Brexit, and its likely effect remains unknown as I write. The UK cruise industry will face challenges and we will just have to wait and see how it is affected. It's too early to say, but we will report on changes as they unfold.

On a positive note though, early in July Emerald Waterways reported a surge in sales since the referendum result, with a sales boost in excess of 30%. It said that, in light of the diminishing value of the British Pound, holidaymakers are investing in all-included river cruises, as fixed prices will not be affected, despite fluctuations in the financial market.

In this issue we are looking at cruise itineraries in one of the hottest new destinations - Cuba - and in two of the most exotic - the Irrawaddy and Mekong rivers.

We have introduced a new column by Royal Caribbean International's Stuart Leven (p16) and there's an in-depth Making Waves feature on Crystal Cruises - a company that is undergoing various interesting developments at the moment, most recently with the launch of Crystal Mozart. There are also details of the Wave Awards 2017 and two great new Cruise Trade News events - Rising Stars and The Cruise Challenge.

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published by Real Response Media, St. Marks Studios, 14 Chillingworth Road, Islington, London N7 8QJ

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issn 059-9986

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CONTRIBUTORS



ANGELA CRONIN has been writing about travel for nearly 20 years for both trade and consumer publications, developing a passion for cruising over the last 10 years.



JEANNINE WILLIAMSON A former newspaper journalist, Jeannine is now a travel writer and winner of the 2015 CLIA award for the Best Regional Newspaper Feature.



GILLY PICKUP is an author and journalist who contributes to a number of national and regional newspapers and magazines, mainly writing about cruising and travel.

QM2 MAKES HISTORY WITH £90 MILLION REFURBISHMENT

QUEEN MARY 2 has returned to service after the most expensive refit to any ship in Cunard's 176-year history.

Over the course of 25 days, areas of the ship have been remastered including the Kings Court buffet, where food stations replace long counters. Speciality restaurant Todd English is replaced with The Verandah, echoing the eateries on Queen Elizabeth and Queen Victoria, and the Winter Garden has become the Carinthia Lounge, an attractive venue serving light bites through the day.

There are 45 new cabins: 30 for Britannia Club passengers and 15 for solo travellers. All cabins have been fitted with tea and coffee makers, and the Princess and Queens Grill restaurants have been reconfigured with more tables for two.

Rain and several hundred spectators greeted Queen Mary 2 as she sailed into Southampton for the first time after her £90 million refit.

NORWEGIAN WELCOMES A NEW DAWN

A MEXICAN RESTAURANT, Bliss Lounge and Cellars Wine Bar (pictured) have been fitted to Norwegian Dawn during a month-long makeover. Part of the company's \$400 million upgrade programme, the changes also include a new O'Sheehan's Bar & Grill, and updated décor in the public areas, cabins and spa. Norwegian Dawn is sailing from Boston to Bermuda each week through the summer, and from New Orleans to the Caribbean in winter. From £529 per person cruise-only departing November 20.

0333 241 2319 | ncl.co.uk



Cellars Wine Bar

FJORDS, SEABIRDS, SEALS, HIKES AND MORE FROM HEBRIDEAN

HEBRIDEAN ISLAND CRUISES 50-passenger Hebridean Princess is venturing away from its home in Scotland with three cruises around the Norwegian fjords next summer.

The ship heads across the North Sea on July 19, on an eight-night voyage from Invergordon to Bergen. That will be followed by a 10-night sailing round-trip from Bergen that includes calls at Sognefjord, Olden, Alesund and Geirangerfjord.

A 10-night Nordic Odyssey cruise departing August 8 brings Hebridean Princess back from Bergen to Scotland. Prices start from £6,550 per person including one-way air fare.

The 2017 season also features a selection of food, golf and garden-themed cruises

including a one-week Castles and Gardens cruise round-trip from Oban departing June 20 from £4,540 per person.

Four Footloose itineraries offer a choice of walks and hikes at each port. These itineraries are priced from £3,110 per person for a seven-night cruise from Oban to Greenock departing October 24.

A wildlife cruise departing May 9 will take passengers to see the seabird colonies on Handa Island and the Shiant Isles, and search for seals on Skye. From £4,060 per person.

The season starts with a five-night voyage round-trip from Greenock departing March 1 that visits the Isle of Arran. From £1,510 per person.

01756 704704 | hebridean.co.uk

4 Viking Sun is the fourth Viking Ocean Cruises ship to enter service

14 British Isles cruises from Southampton and Dover in 2017 Princess programme

10 million pounds lavished on Thomson Cruises' TUI Discovery

NEWS BRIEFS

GALA WELCOME AS TUI DISCOVERY JOINS THE THOMSON FLEET

THOMSON CRUISES PROMISED something for everyone as it welcomed TUI Discovery to the fleet last month.

Managing director Helen Caron said the company was moving into a new era. "Now we have balconies we will appeal to more people. To younger couples and families who want a smaller ship but never considered Thomson."

TUI Discovery, the former Royal Caribbean



International Splendour of the Seas, was renamed during a gala ceremony in Palma that included fireworks and a show by UK singer Jess Glynne.

The ship is 20 years old but was refurbished in 2012 and has just had £10 million lavished on it. It has around 366 balcony cabins - more than any other Thomson ship - and more dining venues, including Kora La, which serves cuisine created by top Asian chef Ian Pengelly, a new steakhouse, and an Italian restaurant.

TUI Discovery is the first of four ships joining Thomson Cruises by 2019. Royal Caribbean's Legend of the Seas joins as TUI Discovery 2 in May 2017, while Mein Schiff I and Mein Schiff II transfer from sister company TUI Cruises in 2018 and 2019. Thomson Majesty and Thomson Spirit will leave the fleet next year.

Caron said: "We are taking away the traditional idea of cruising and adding something for everyone while retaining key USPs such as included gratuities and flycruise holidays." Starting summer 2017, Thomson is including drinks in the cruise price on TUI Discovery. 0871 230 2800 | thomson.co.uk/cruise

KONINGSDDAM BELL GETS A BLESSING FROM ROYALTY

HER MAJESTY Queen Maxima of the Netherlands blesses the bell on Holland America Line's new Koningsdam during a gala naming ceremony in Rotterdam. The ship, the largest ever built by Holland America, is currently sailing in Northern Europe. It relocates to Fort Lauderdale in autumn for a winter season of cruises in the Caribbean. 0843 374 2300 | hollandamerica.com



VIKING PLANS ON HAVANA GREAT TIME

VIKING OCEAN CRUISES will be visiting Cuba next year as part of an expanded programme of cruises in the Caribbean and South America, including the Amazon River.

The cruise is on Viking Sun, a new ship scheduled to launch in 2017. It will sail round-trip from Miami in December 2017 and stay

overnight in Havana, as well as visiting Cozumel, Belize and Key West. Prices are not yet available.

Viking Sun will be the company's fourth ship. Viking Star, its first, launched last year. Viking Star was followed by Viking Sea in March. Ship number three, Viking Sky, enters service in March 2017.

And next year will also see Viking's debut world cruise, a 141-day voyage from Miami to London on Viking Sun that departs December 15 2017 and includes a night in Havana. From £38,090 per person including business-class flights. 020 8780 7995 | vikingcruises.co.uk

A SHORT SEASON OF cruises on new ship Majestic Princess is among the highlights of Princess Cruises' 2017 Europe programme. The cruise line will have six ships in the Mediterranean and Northern Europe, and 14 British Isles cruises - more than ever - from Southampton and Dover.

CELESTYAL CRUISES is offering a beach stop at Punta Frances on the Isla de la Juventud on its voyages around Cuba from November. It replaces calls at Maria La Gorda. The itinerary also includes an overnight in Havana, calls at Cienfuegos and Santiago de Cuba, and a day in Montego Bay in Jamaica.

CLIA predicts the global cruise industry will reach 24.2 million passengers by the end of 2016. Much of the growth is expected in Asia and Australia.

CHEF-LED tours to markets, Michelin-starred restaurants and vineyards are among a new selection of gourmet excursions Regent Seven Seas Cruises is offering on Regent Seven Seas Explorer. The vessel launched in early July with a Culinary Arts Kitchen offering hands-on cooking lessons.

SAGA Cruises is retracing its very first voyage next spring to celebrate its 20th anniversary. The voyage, on Saga Sapphire, will depart Dover on May 20 and call at Lisbon, Malaga, Livorno and Civitavecchia.

DUAL RACER waterslides, a FlowRider surf simulator and children's aquapark will be added to Royal Caribbean International's Adventure of the Seas this autumn. The \$61 million refurbishment is due to be completed by November 2016.

MINERVA MAKES A GRAND ENTRANCE!

CLOUDY SKIES, BUT also a warm welcome were waiting for Swan Hellenic's Minerva as it returned to London 20 years after it was christened on the Thames. The ship was in the capital as part of a garden-themed cruise around France that visited Monet's Garden in Giverny and the Jardin des Plantes in Nantes. Swan Hellenic has a garden-themed cruise around the UK and France from Portsmouth departing July 15 next year. From £2,057 per person.

01858 898278 | swanhellenic.com



Minerva

RAISE A GLASS TO SEADREAM'S 2017 WINE CRUISES

SEADREAM YACHT Club has launched seven wine-themed cruises in the Mediterranean next year.

Each will be joined by guest winemakers including Clovis Taittinger, who joins a wine-themed cruise from Piraeus to Civitavecchia next September, and feature wine tastings and

excursions to premier wineries.

Passengers will be able to taste Burgundy wines from Maison Louis Jadot and visit Sorrentino winery at the base of Mount Vesuvius, the volcano that destroyed Pompeii.

On each cruise, a degustation menu created around the top cuvées from

the visiting winemaker will be served. Wine tastings are complimentary but excursions and cuvées served at the dinner cost extra.

Prices start from £3,397 per person cruise-only for seven days departing September 23. **0800 783 1373 | seadream.com**

STAR CLIPPERS EXTENDS CUBA CRUISES WITH HOTEL OVERNIGHTS

STAR CLIPPERS HAS launched new nine and 10-night cruises between Havana and Cienfuegos in Cuba in winter 2017-18 that include an overnight in a hotel in either or both cities.

The cruises are on the 170-passenger Star Flyer, which will be cruising around Cuba in December 2017 and January 2018. Prices start from £1,705 per person cruise-only for nine nights departing December 18 2017.

In February and March, Star Flyer relocates to St Maarten for a series of voyages that visit the British Virgin Islands, Anguilla, St Barts, Nevis and St Kitts.

The 227-passenger Royal Clipper will be cruising seven and 14-night voyages from Barbados that visit islands including St Lucia, Antigua, Bequia, Dominica and Martinique. From £1,365 per person cruise-only departing December 16.

Star Clipper, a sister ship to Star Flyer, will sail alternate seven-night voyages island-hopping around Thailand and Malaysia from Phuket.

From £1,220 per person cruise-only departing December 9 2017.

0808 231 4798 | starclippers.co.uk



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SAGA PASSENGERS ARE GOING IT ALONE

Over-50s specialist Saga has launched its third river cruise exclusively for solo passengers after seeing huge demand for the first two. Departing March 28 2017, the Springtime Colours of the Rhine is a seven-night cruise on the Regina Rheni II, pictured, sailing from Arnhem in Holland to Bonn in Germany. Prices start from £999 per person including coach travel from Folkestone. Travel by air or Eurostar from St Pancras in London is available for a supplement. 0800 300 400 | saga.co.uk/rivercruises



Regina Rheni II

VANTAGE LAUNCHES 2017 WITH LONGER CRUISES, MORE FOR FAMILIES AND SUMMER SAILINGS

GRAND JOURNEYS THAT link two or more river cruises are among new features in Vantage Travel's 2017 programme.

Vice-president global sales Derek Lloyd said next year's sailings have been scheduled to allow passengers to combine trips as often as possible.

Options include a Best of France cruise that links the Seine and Rhône. A 24-day Holland to Hungary itinerary combines a cruise through Holland and Belgium with a voyage from Amsterdam to Budapest. Prices start from £4,924 per person departing May 30.

The company, which started selling in the UK this year, has also extended its Holland and Belgium sailings into summer. Traditionally

these sailings run in the spring tulip season only.

Lloyd said: "[These] sailings include historical elements of World War II, spectacular countryside and cities, the best of local food and the chance to see the windmills in the summer sunshine."

The 2017 programme also features eight new family cruises with free berths for children and special tours and activities to appeal to kids.

Most sailings have an allocation of single cabins with prices from £1,099. Lloyd said: "Single cabins sell out first so we encourage solo guests to plan ahead."

01954 232802 | vantagetravel.com

AVALON GETS FRESH WITH FOOD

AVALON WATERWAYS HAS teamed up with Austrian brothers Karl and Leo Wrenkh to give its dining a fresh and healthy flavour.

The brothers grew up in the first high-quality vegetarian restaurant in Vienna and opened a cookery school in the city in 2009 offering classes in everything from Indian cuisine to traditional Viennese dishes.

Starting in 2017, they will be providing a variety of local and international dishes that use ingredients that have been sourced locally on all Avalon cruises under the Avalon Fresh slogan.

US managing director Patrick Clark said the new partnership takes Avalon's cuisine "to the next level". He added: "This exciting collection of new food will be so mouth-watering, it will be hard to believe it's healthy."

Avalon has a themed culinary cruise on the Seine departing April 25 2017 that will include cookery talks and tastings. From £2,141 per person including flights and UK and overseas transfers.

0800 668 1843 | avaloncruises.co.uk

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

FRED.I has launched a debut 2017 AmaWaterways brochure after being appointed preferred partner for the river cruise line. From September 1, AmaWaterways will have its own office in the UK headed by Stuart Perl, replacing the gsa status previously enjoyed by Fred . Olsen Travel.

UNIWORLD has launched a deposit protection scheme that allows passengers to use their £250 down-payment as credit against a future cruise provided it is booked within five years after the cancellation. The deposit can also be used as credit for a cruise-and-tour holiday with sister company Insight Vacations.

ELISABETH GÜRTLER, managing director of Vienna's Sacher Hotel, has been selected as godmother to Crystal Cruises' first river cruise boat, Crystal Mozart. It was named earlier this month (July) in Vienna.

RIVIERA TRAVEL is offering two 16-day holidays in South America that combine a visit to Machu Picchu, Cusco and Lake Titicaca with three nights cruising the Amazon River. Departures on September 6 and November 8 cost from £3,999 per person including flights.

YEAR-ROUND CHARTER FIRST FROM TITAN

TITAN TRAVEL HAS chartered the 128-passenger Serenade 1 to sail on the Rhine and Danube starting March 2017.

This is a first for the tour operator – the first time it has chartered its own vessel for a whole year. Previously Titan has always packaged other companies' river cruises with flights and UK and overseas transfers.

Serenade 1 will start its season sailing for Titan with two spring-time cruises in Holland. In the summer and autumn it will sail the Rhine and Danube. The vessel was built in 2005 and has 62 cabins and two suites.

Prices start from £999 per person for a six-day cruise on the Dutch Waterways departing March 31

2017 including coach travel from the UK. An eight-day Southern German Romance cruise sailing the Rhine and Main rivers costs from £1,499 per person departing October 2 2017 including flights and transfers.

Prices also include Titan's VIP home transfer service, up to six excursions, wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner, and wifi. Selected departures have no single supplements.

A 10-day Treasures of the Danube itinerary combines a voyage from Vienna to Passau with two nights in Salzburg. A 10-day Legends of Germany tour pairs two nights in Lucerne, Switzerland, with a Rhine cruise from Basel to Cologne.

0800 988 5873 | titantravel.co.uk

BOOKINGS OPEN FOR CLIA RIVER CRUISE CONVENTION

SIX VESSELS WILL be on show to agents during CLIA UK & Ireland's river cruise convention, which returns to Amsterdam on November 20-21.

Making their debut at the event are Riviera Travel's William Shakespeare and Amadeus River Cruises' Amadeus Silver III.

Agents will also be able to visit Emerald Waterways' Emerald Dawn, Shearings' Da Vinci and Uniworld River Cruises' Antoinette. Tauck has promised to bring a vessel but has yet to confirm which it will be.

As in previous years, day one of the event will include conference sessions and a trade fair. Agents will stay overnight on one of the vessels and have tours of them all the following morning.

The cost of the convention had not been finalised as CTN went to press.

0203 582 4378 | cruiseexperts.org

CROISIEUROPE UNVEILS ACTIVITY EXCURSIONS

CROISIEUROPE HAS UNVEILED a selection of activity-based excursions that it is launching in 2017 for clients who want more action-packed days ashore. Options include walking, cycling and wine-tasting, as well as city tours on Segways. There are helicopter rides over the Loire, tours of the Doge's Palace in Venice and a trip around Paris in a classic French Deux Chevaux car.

0208 328 1281 | croisieurope.co.uk



Croisieurope
Discovery
Excursions



Tauck Joy
Christening

TAUCK ABOUT SMASHING!

TAUCK EMPLOYEES JACQUE Moran, Mary Murrin and Kristin Robinson had a smashing time when they were chosen as joint godmothers for the company's new river boat, Joy. All three joined Tauck as tour directors and have gone on to hold management positions in the company. Joy, Tauck's second new river boat this year, was named in Straubing in Germany.

0800 810 8020 | tauck.co.uk



Nick Wilkinson
general
manager,
NE MEA
Norwegian
Cruise Line



Hello again everyone.

Grandparents leading multigenerational holidays, couples booking destination wedding holidays and families celebrating milestone birthdays together is incredibly positive news, as it shows that consumers are rediscovering the value of group experiences.

This development is a great opportunity to add a revenue stream by leveraging this market. And the larger the group the more people are made aware of the advantages a cruise holiday offers over a land-based holiday.

With this in mind, make sure you ask your customer: who are you travelling with? Once you have a good understanding of the group that will be travelling, you can advise them on the relevant and wide variety of facilities on board a cruise ship. Cruise offers so much for all ages - kids' clubs, multiple restaurants to cater for every tastebud, spas to relax in, Broadway shows to enjoy and spectacular water parks for the adventurous.

Getting to the heart of the customer and finding out individual and group preferences will provide indicators on which product and brand is the best fit in order for you to sell the cruise package that is perfect for them.

Agents who recognise the importance of building relationships and see the value in large group bookings will be the ones who benefit throughout the next few months. Take advantage of the tools available, think innovatively and use your expertise to guide customers through the holiday booking process. Let's make this summer more successful than ever and introduce even more consumers to cruise.

AdventureNEWS

LUXURY IN THE LAND THAT TIME FORGOT

SILVERSEA WILL BE offering two new one-week itineraries in the Galapagos on the 100-passenger Silver Galapagos starting March 25 2017. A north central itinerary from Baltra to San Cristobal includes a circumnavigation of Daphne Grande. Sailing in the opposite direction, from San Cristobal to Baltra, the ship will circumnavigate Kicker Rock. From £4,725 per person cruise-only.

0844 251 0837 | silversea.com



GET MORE GALAPAGOS!

CELEBRITY CRUISES HAS launched a 13-night cruise-and-stay holiday in the Galapagos.

Offered from March 2017 on Celebrity Xperience, it combines two nights in Quito, Ecuador, with a week's cruise and three nights in a hotel in Puerto Ayora in Santa Cruz Island. From £9,635 per person including flights departing April 14 2017.

Celebrity Xperience holds 48 passengers, while Celebrity Xploration has capacity for just 16 people. It will be sailing seven-night cruises around the islands.

0800 441 4054 | celebritycruises.co.uk

G SAILS TO THE FJORDS

G ADVENTURES HAS launched a Norwegian cruise programme for 2017 in response to demand for voyages around the fjords. The cruises are on the company's 134-passenger ship Expedition and start with a 14-night voyage from Edinburgh to Tromsø that visits the Shetland and Orkney Islands before reaching Norway and sailing up the coast from Bergen.

As well as port calls and a day at the North Cape, the most northerly point in Europe, there will also be a Zodiac excursion to see the rock formations at Torgatten and the Treana archipelago. From £2,592 per person cruise-only based on sharing a four-berth cabin.

From Tromsø, Expedition will head back to Bergen on an eight-night voyage departing May 24 2017 that visits the Lofoten Islands, Torgatten and Trondheim. Departing Bergen on May 31, Expedition heads back to Tromsø, sailing north to Spitsbergen and the realm of the polar bear.

This cruise is 15 days and costs from £2,974 per person cruise-only based on sharing a four-berth cabin. Twin rooms start from £4,674 per person.

0844 272 2040 | gadventures.co.uk

NEWS BRIEFS

HURTIGRUTEN IS launching a Young Explorers Programme for children aged seven to 13 on board Midnatsol when it is cruising in Antarctica. Offered at no charge, it will include science, polar history, photography and nautical activities to teach kids about the Southern Ocean.

SILVERSEA'S SILVER Discoverer makes history next February when it becomes the first cruise ship ever to visit Bangladesh. During a 16-day cruise from Colombo in Sri Lanka to Kolkata in India, it will spend four days in the country, visiting Chittagong, Maheshkhali Island and the Sundarbans.

A TEAM of photographic experts will offer advice and tips to passengers on One Ocean Expeditions' 19-night voyage to the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and Antarctica departing October 31. The cruise, from Ushuaia to Stanley, costs from \$8,995 per person sharing a four-berth cabin.

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new appointments



Stuart Perl

STUART PERL TO TAKE OVER FOR AMAWATERWAYS IN UK AND EUROPE



AMAWATERWAYS HAS MOVED to change its representation in the UK and Europe.

Stuart Perl has been appointed as managing director and a new office is expected to be up and running by September.

Fred. Olsen Travel will continue in its present role as Ama's UK representative until then, after which it becomes a 'preferred partner'.

Just hours after being inducted into the CLIA Hall of Fame, at a gala dinner in Vancouver, AmaWaterways president Rudi Schreiner phoned CTN's JOHN HONEYWELL to explain the move.

"We have grown to 21 ships in Europe and we need to look at developing the markets outside America," he said. "We are particularly keen to expand in Scandinavia and Germany."

In the UK, from September 1, AmaWaterways will focus on both trade and consumer business. Fred. Olsen Travel operates as a preferred partner for AmaWaterways UK, selling both Ama and other river cruise partners under the Fred. Olsen River Cruise brand to trade and consumers, while Stuart will focus on developing relationships with travel agents.

Dubbed the 'Godfather of River Cruising', Schreiner's experience of river travel began in his 20s, when he built a raft on which he and a group of friends sailed the Amazon for seven months.

He and his wife, co-owner Kristin Karst, founded AmaWaterways in 2002, together with Jimmy Murphy, who died in 2014.

Recognising Schreiner with a Lifetime Achievement Award, CLIA acknowledged the way AmaWaterways has embraced the travel agent community, "building powerful personal relationships with travel professionals". CLIA also commended his innovations – from ship hardware to brand partnerships [with APT and Disney among others] and the implementation of new services, tours and amenities.

Accepting the award, Schreiner said: "I have dedicated my career to expanding river cruising and I am still just as passionate as when I started. I am also inspired by the opportunity that exists ahead, with so much untapped potential."

Perl, whose travel career has included Seabourn, Cunard, and Peter Deilmann, will be setting up the AmaWaterways office in Guildford, Surrey.



CRUISE & MARITIME VOYAGES (CMV) has appointed

Moira Gregson to its expanding sales team. Moira takes up the position of business development manager – tour operators. She joins from Diamond Holiday Group. During her career she has had 13 years' involvement in travel trade sales for ocean and river cruise operators that has included Carnival UK and CruiseCo.

CRYSTAL CRUISES HAS



named **Walter Littlejohn** vice president and managing director of

Crystal River Cruises.

Littlejohn stepped into the role in June, ahead of the maiden voyage of the line's first luxury river ship, Crystal Mozart, which sailed on the Danube River from Vienna on July 13.

Littlejohn's 24-year tenure in the travel industry spans several executive and leadership roles, most recently as vice president with AmaWaterways. His appointment comes hard on the heels of the announcement of the departure of longtime Crystal executive, Philip Ordever. Littlejohn will divide his time between the Miami branch office and the Crystal River Cruises' headquarters, located in Amsterdam. He will report to the cruise line's COO, Thomas Mazloum, and SVP of marketing and sales, Carmen Roig.



CARNIVAL UK IS bringing onboard hotel operations together with

brand and marketing teams across Cunard and P&O Cruises.

Among the changes, **Simon Palethorpe** becomes Cunard senior vice president and Paul Ludlow takes the role of P&O Cruises senior vice president, both overseeing expanded organisations.

Carnival UK CEO David Noyes said: "This year has already seen us deliver some spectacular events, most notably Saturday Night Takeaway live from Britannia in Barcelona. Now we are on the cusp of delivering QM2 remastered as we complete her major refit.

"These projects will continue to attract significant attention for our brands. As a result, we have decided to bring the onboard hotel operations teams together with the brand and marketing teams to encourage closer working between the teams."

ROYAL CARIBBEAN INTERNATIONAL has



appointed a new head of retail. **Sarah Weetman** will play a key role in the sales

leadership team in the UK and Ireland.

Sarah joined Royal Caribbean this June from cruise and touring operator All Leisure where she held the position of head of trade sales. She brings with her a wealth of experience in travel, and close working relationships with the UK's leading independent travel operators.

TOOLS of the TRADE

Here we reveal the latest cruise training opportunities, incentives and fam trip offers



Crystal Cruises recently hosted a group of Readers Offers travel agents on board Crystal Symphony for the day in Tilbury Port. They had a tour of the ship and were then treated to lunch. Mick Dupont, head of sales UK, Crystal Cruises who led one of the tours is pictured with Claire Brown (left) and Amber Bellringer both from Reader Offers, Colchester. (Read Making Waves about the latest developments for the cruise line on pages 28-31)

WIN A PLACE ON A CRYSTAL MOZART FAM TRIP

TO CELEBRATE THE LAUNCH of Crystal Mozart, Crystal River Cruises has introduced an incentive giving agents the opportunity to win a place on a fam trip. For every Crystal River Cruises' booking made between July 1-31 2016, agents will be entered into a draw to win a fam trip place on board the new vessel. Bookings for 2017 and 2018 departures earn one entry into the draw while bookings for 2016 departures will earn two entries.

The 106-guest ship made its maiden

voyage on July 13 and will sail two distinct itineraries of 10 and 11 nights along the Danube, plus a special 13-night Christmas and New Year's Eve voyage. All inclusive cruise/only fares from £2,130 per person.

Meanwhile, the company has joined Online Travel Training to launch a new training programme to help agents sell Crystal with confidence.

The first training module provides up-to-date information and key features of the Crystal Cruises' fleet, while two further

modules cover Crystal's newly launched brands, Crystal Yacht Cruises and Crystal River Cruises. Agents can also meet the team, order brochures and learn about the latest incentives and offers.

Once all three modules have been updated, the agent will receive a certificate and a bar of chocolate.

crystalcruisestraining.co.uk/
Call 020 7399 7604 or email sales@cruiportfolio.co.uk

TITAN OFFERS MS SERENADE 1 FAM TRIP AND LOVE2SHOP VOUCHERS

FOLLOWING TITAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT that it will exclusively charter the 136-passenger MS Serenade 1 next year and the launch of its new River Cruise Preview 2017 brochure, the company is offering the top 10 river cruise bookers from May to October 2016 a place on the first MS Serenade 1 fam trip in Spring 2017. It is also giving agents the chance to claim a £20 love2shop voucher for every river cruise booking.

Brochures are available from BP Trade-gate or visit titanagents.co.uk for more details.



TUI DISCOVERY IS ALL INCLUSIVE FROM SUMMER 2017.



Say hello to TUI Discovery, the latest addition to our fleet. Plus, from summer 2017 everyone goes All Inclusive, meaning a huge choice of drinks, meals and most onboard activities will all be part of the deal.*

Search on your Agent Browser

WELCOME TO THE
WORLD OF



*All Inclusive on TUI Discovery applies to sailings departing on and after 6th May 2017. On TUI Discovery cruises, everyone receives our All Inclusive package. All Inclusive drinks include selected draught and bottled beers, spirits, aperitifs, cider, soft drinks by the glass, house wine and house Prosecco by the glass, selected hot drinks and selected cocktails. Free filtered water stations are also available. Some branded spirits and premium drinks, such as cocktails, Champagne, malt whiskies, guest beers, all speciality coffees, bottled water and some premium hot drinks, aren't included. Drinks are available from all bars, lounges and restaurants. If you order any drink between 2am and 10am, it'll be charged to your onboard account. The minimum drinking age on our ships is 18. The All Inclusive package only applies when you're on the ship and doesn't apply to hotels on Cruise & Stay or Stay & Cruise holidays. The following dining venues are included in your All Inclusive package – 47°, Gallery 47°, Islands, Snack Shack and The Glass House. Additional Supplements apply to selected dishes in The Glass House and Gallery 47°. Times for inclusive meals and snacks vary. The following facilities are included in your All Inclusive package – mini golf, The Wall, The Veranda (adults only), Gamerzone, Baby Centre, Kids' Club, The Hideout (and Karaoke booth), Movies by Moonlight. There are time limits or age restrictions on some of these activities. The safety deposit box in your cabin is included. Telephone calls, internet and excursions will come at a supplement. Please see www.thomson.co.uk or the relevant brochure for full booking terms and conditions that apply. All the flights and flight-inclusive holidays are financially protected by the ATOL scheme. When you pay you will be supplied with an ATOL Certificate. Please ask for it and check to ensure that everything you booked (flights, hotels and other services) is listed on it. Please see our booking conditions for further information or for more information about financial protection and the ATOL Certificate go to: www.atol.org.uk/ATOLCertificate. Thomson Cruises is a trading name of TUI UK Limited, a member of TUI Group. Registered office: TUI Travel House, Crawley Business Quarter, Fleming Way, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 9QL. Registered in England No: 2830117. ABTA No: V5126.

6 course gourmet lunch experience offered to agents by Oceania Cruises

82 per cent of young adults using Facebook – an opportunity for cruise?

SCOTTISH AGENTS SEE CMV'S MAGELLAN IN INVERGORDON

CRUISE AND MARITIME Voyages (CMV) recently hosted travel trade partners in Invergordon to have lunch and a tour around its ship Magellan.

Wayne Beard, CMV's business development manager for Northern England and Scotland, who was on hand to provide information and details about the ship said: "We had a super group of agents and we were delighted with many favourable comments from them."

For next year, the company has more Scottish departures featuring Dundee, Greenock and Rosyth.

There are still vacancies available for visiting ships this year. To book a place, contact the agency sales team on 0844 414 6140 or agents@cruiseandmaritime.com
cruiseandmaritime.com



Wayne Beard, CMV, with some of the local agents from Travel Counsellors, Beaver Travel, Spirit Journeys Worldwide and Alba Travel in Invergordon outside one of Magellan's bars.

IMMERSION OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRAVEL AGENTS ATTENDING CLIA CRUISE360 IN MARSEILLE

CONFERENCE AND BUSINESS sessions for CLIA's first European conference have been announced, together with details of complimentary immersion tours of the Provence region for travel agents.

Cruise360 Marseille will combine a conference and breakout business sessions covering topics including expedition holidays, shore-side experiences and marketing techniques and tips. Travel agents are also being offered a series of excursions to help them become more knowledgeable about the French region and the port.

Cruise360 Marseille takes place between October 20-22, with optional ship visit days on October 19-23. The ships include Holland America Line's Oosterdam; Carnival Vista; MSC Poesia, Norwegian Epic; Costa Diadema; Thomson Majesty and Celebrity Reflection.

Visit cruiseexperts.org for further information and registration for Cruise360

OCEANIA CRUISES ANNOUNCES SHIP VISIT OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUMMER 2016

OCEANIA CRUISES HAS announced a number of opportunities for the UK travel trade to get on board to experience The Finest Cuisine at Sea™.

Nautica, Marina and Insignia will be travelling around Great Britain. Agents will be treated to a six-course gourmet lunch with wine in the Grand Dining Room, along with a presentation and the chance to meet some of the UK team.

In addition to the dates, Marina will be showcased at the CLIA UK & Ireland Luxury Cruise Expo on August 15 in Southampton.

Remaining dates available for ship visits are until September 20 this year. Travel agents can register their interest by emailing EventsUK@OceaniaCruises.com

Rest of UK

- Newcastle (Tyne), August 6, Marina
- Plymouth, September 20, Nautica
- Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland
- Belfast, August 1, Nautica
- Dublin, August 2, Nautica
- Belfast, August 10, Marina
- Dublin, August 11, Marina

comment



SOCIAL MEDIA: LET'S TALK!

Stuart Leven
managing
director,
Royal Caribbean
International
UK & Ireland



RESHAPING THE CRUISE INDUSTRY THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Cruises. How many customers do you come across that have preconceived notions as to what they are, who the average guest is and what's on offer? We still have a lot of work as an industry to show a 'New to Cruise' audience the reality of a modern cruise holiday. With over 38 million foreign holidays being taken in the UK and only 1.8 million of those being cruises, there is a massive opportunity for us to talk to potential customers to change their perceptions. Can you spot a 'potential cruiser' when they walk into your agency? Do you know how to open them up to considering a cruise?

Whether it's a young couple or an active family, what we do know is that social media is a vital communication and information tool for them before they even set foot in a store. With 82% of adults aged 18-29 using Facebook daily and 55% of this group on Instagram every day, it's where they live, plan and share their holiday dreams. We need to be part of that conversation. Our challenge on these fast-growing platforms is to create 'thumb stopping' and relevant content that captures attention while informing and inspiring. At Royal Caribbean, we're seeing growing engagement on these channels every month. On Facebook we have entertained our audience with a video of a world champion Parkour artist free running across Harmony of the Seas. On YouTube we're inspiring people through partnerships with influential bloggers and vloggers, inviting them to share an inside look at all the extraordinary experiences onboard and on shore. We handle customer service enquiries on Twitter and broadcast live events via Periscope.

Once we've captured their imagination, we look to our valued travel partners to continue the education and help us build their confidence in booking their dream holiday. There's no better time for the industry to join the conversation as a means of reaching a wider, newer and younger audience, and inspiring them to try a new type of holiday.

MADE FOR THE EXPLORERS

From the fairytale castles and forest-covered mountains of the Rhine to the ancient temples of China, a Viking river cruise is made for exploring the world in comfort and style. River view staterooms, free guided excursions and a real taste of the destinations visited keep clients coming back for more.

**SAVE £1,000PP ON
2017 RIVER CRUISES**

**8-day river cruises
from £895pp
with all this included
in the price:**

River-view stateroom

All delicious meals on board

Complimentary wine, beer
and soft drinks with lunch and
dinner on board

Complimentary speciality teas
and coffees 24/7

Included excursion in almost
every destination

Free Wi-Fi*

Cultural enrichment programme

Return scheduled flights
from London

Free regional flights from up to
14 UK airports

BOOK YOUR
CURIOUS CLIENTS
ON A VIKING RIVER
CRUISE AND EARN
GREAT COMMISSION



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RIVER CRUISES**

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EUROPE • ASIA • RUSSIA



@VikingTradeUK #madefortrade



madefortrade.co.uk



Terms & Conditions: Prices correct at time of going to print but are subject to change. From prices are per person and based on two people sharing the lowest grade stateroom available on Romantic Danube, departing in December 2017. Prices include £1,000pp saving and are valid until 31 August 2016. Single supplements apply. *Restrictions apply. For more information please visit vikingcruises.co.uk/terms-conditions or call us.



CRUISE TRADE NEWS EVENTS

We're gearing up for the Wave Awards 2017 – and building on the success of the inaugural event last year. Next year's ceremony will take place on February 16 and you, the travel agent, are recognised in a number of categories that specifically acknowledge your hard work.

There are four key judging sectors but for agents it's the Industry categories that matter. Here you will find Best Cruise Agent, Best Online Cruise Agent and Best Individual Cruise Consultant, a special award free to enter for all agents that will be presented to an individual who has made a unique or outstanding contribution within the cruise holiday sector. Nominations apply to anyone in the sector and nominees can be experienced senior personnel or younger entrants. Individuals and organisations are welcome to get in touch directly with their nominations. The judges may also nominate candidates they feel qualify for this award.

Lee Ashton of Thomson Holidays Bolton Superstore, who won the Best Individual Cruise Consultant award last year, told us: "I was thrilled to be a winner at the Wave

Awards. It was a great evening – and the perfect opportunity to network with other agents and travel experts in the cruise sector. I encourage anyone considering entering – or nominating someone – to go for it."

All entries will be judged by an independent and multi-disciplined panel of cruise travel experts, separate from the independently judged public voting awards. All entries must be submitted by October 30, 2016.

ENTER

Enter online thewaveawards.com

VENUE & DATE

The Wave Awards 2017 will once again be held at the Royal Garden Hotel in Kensington, London on February 16.



SECTORS AND CATEGORIES

There are four key judging sectors, broken down into sector-specific categories:

THE SECTORS

Cruise Line
Ports & Destinations
On Board
Industry

THE CATEGORIES (independently judged)

Cruise Line Categories

Best Ocean Cruise Line
Best River Cruise Line
Best Luxury Cruise Line
Best Premium Cruise Line
Best Specialist Cruise Line
Best Family Cruise Line
Best Value-for-Money Cruise Line
Best New Ship Launch
(Ocean or River)

On Board Categories

Best for Accommodation
Best for Wellbeing & Spas
Best for Enrichment
Best for Cuisine
Best for Entertainment
Best for Children or Teenagers

Ports & Destinations Categories

Best UK Departure Port
Best Destination (Country or Port)
Best UK Attraction or Excursion
Best International Attraction or Excursion

Industry Categories

Best Cruise Agent
Best Online Cruise Agent
Best Individual Cruise Agent
Best Digital or Web-based Service or Platform
Best Advertising, Marketing or PR Campaign

Best Escorted & Specialist Tour Operator
Best Transfer Service
Best for Environment and Sustainability

Passenger Favourites

(Public Voting Categories)
Favourite Ocean Cruise Line
Favourite River Cruise Line
Favourite Luxury or Premium Cruise Line
Favourite Specialist Cruise Line
Favourite Cruise Destination
Favourite Cruise Agent
Favourite Airline

JUDGES CONFIRMED FOR 2017 SO FAR ARE:

- **Andy Harmer** (non-voting Chair) - vice president operations, CLIA Europe
- **Juliet Archer**, managing director, Blue Water Holidays (Cruise Agency of the Year 2015)
- **Lesley Bellew**, editor, Cruise Ports & Destinations magazine
- **Claire Brighton**, senior commercial manager, Advantage Travel Partnership
- **Simone Clark**, managing director, Iglu.com
- **Joseph Grimly**, head of agency sales, Riviera Travel
- **Giles Hawke**, CEO, Cosmos Tours & Avalon Waterways
- **John Honeywell**, editor-at-large, World of Cruising magazine
- **Louise Robinson**, editor, World of Cruising magazine
- **Jill Sayles**, editor, Cruise Trade News magazine
- **Nikki White**, head of destinations and sustainability, ABTA
- **Sally Winfield**, chief executive officer, Accord Marketing
- **Erin Johnson**, marketing director, UK & Ireland, Carnival Cruise Lines.

The eligibility period for work submitted to the 2017 awards is September 1, 2015 to October 30, 2016.



SPONSORS

There's a great list of sponsors supporting the event so far, including headline sponsor Saga Cruises; Uniworld River Cruises; Titan Travel; Azamara Club Cruises; Fred.Olsen Cruise Lines; Accord Marketing; AmaWaterways; Falkland Islands Tourist Board; Carnival Cruise Lines.

For more sponsorship opportunities contact:
peter.grant@worldofcruisingmagazine.com

GET INVOLVED IN TWO NEW AND EXCITING CRUISE TRADE NEWS EVENTS

Cruise Trade News is launching two exciting events for travel agents: Rising Stars and The Cruise Challenge



WHERE EXTRAORDINARY HAPPENS

ARE YOU A RISING STAR?

Rising Stars will recognise the most innovative and talented people in the cruise holidays sector. They will identify the cruise industry's stars of the future in all relevant areas, including sales, marketing, operations, management and digital, as well, of course, as travel agents. These people are the leaders of tomorrow – the under-35s whose hard work and dedication to the cruise business is already being recognised by their bosses, colleagues and rivals.

We are seeking out these individuals and want to reward them for their current contribution and their role in the future success of the cruise sector.

So if you consider yourself to be one of these people, or know someone who is, send in your nominations. The judges will look at each nominee and how and whether he or she meets four key attributes: dynamism, initiative, creativity and effectiveness. There will be various categories to enter.

The awards come with full backing from Royal Caribbean International to ensure the highest possible criteria are met.

To enter visit: cruisetradenews.co.uk/rising-stars.

THE CRUISE CHALLENGE

The Cruise Challenge is an agent roadshow – with a difference: it's based around a game show! Anyone who takes part will learn, play and win in a fun environment designed to increase their cruise sales knowledge.

There will be various events in the UK this year:
Bristol - Sept 28; Glasgow - Oct 5; Leeds - Oct 19;
Birmingham – Oct 25; London – Nov 2.

To learn more about the events, and to get involved, visit: thecruisechallenge.com



Q&A

GILES HAWKE

CEO,
Cosmos Tours &
Avalon Waterways



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

I joined in mid April and was attracted by several key factors. The Cosmos brand is strong and has good customer recognition, so we have an excellent platform from which to build growth. There is a clear desire by the owners to see the business expand and that promises an exciting few years ahead. The Avalon product is of a high standard and has some differentiating factors which make it ripe for expansion in the UK market.

HOW IS YOUR COMPANY DIFFERENT TO OTHER CRUISE LINES?

We work with the world's best ocean and river cruise lines to package the most exciting choice of cruise holidays, from coastal sailing around Croatia and Montenegro to sailing the mighty Mississippi by luxury paddle steamer. With worldwide offices, we can enhance a cruise holiday with city stays, rail journeys or time in a coastal resort, so our customers can get to the heart of a destination with more time for sightseeing.

With Avalon we have a number of USPs which allow us to be very clear about why we are different: our cabins are the largest on European rivers, we have the one and only bed with a river view, and our wall-to-wall, floor-to-ceiling balcony windows are truly unique.

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

I'm excited about developing the strategy for growth for the business, about improving relationships with travel agents who want to work with us and about transforming our business to a more digitally enabled one.



CV

APRIL 2016 – TO
DATE
Cosmos Tours
Ltd
CEO

2013 – 2016
MSC Cruises
exec director, UK
& I, Scandinavia
and Australia

2003
Carnival UK
sales and
customer service
director

2002
Highlife Breaks
commercial
director

2000
Specialist
Holidays Group
sales director

1982
Crystal Ski
overseas ski rep
and operations
manager

HOW HAS THE CRUISE MARKET CHANGED IN THE LAST 10 YEARS?

The cruise market from the UK remains the fastest growing sector of the travel industry and has undertaken huge growth in the last 10 years. Appealing to a much broader age range and demographic, there is literally an ocean or river cruise for every type of customer and every budget. And in the last five years, the river cruise market has really taken off as people realise it is the most relaxing way to see a destination. Last year saw 150,300 UK passengers enjoying a river cruise.

WHAT IS THE TARGET MARKET OF YOUR COMPANY?

We have a broad market and our product range reflects that with an amazing choice of ocean, coastal cruising and river cruises, but over and above everything we have packaged our cruise holidays with flights and overseas transfers to make them the easiest way for agents to sell to their customers.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FACING CRUISE SALES?

There is too much focus on price and not enough on the quality and inclusiveness of the product. We need to get past the price message and focus on the amazing experience and value for money offered.

HOW DOES THE COMPANY WORK WITH THE TRAVEL TRADE?

As members of CLIA, we offer agents training with webinars, support via roadshows and exhibitions and awareness of our products. We have hosted over 80 agents on a series of fam trips aboard our Suite Ship, Avalon Tapestry, which has resulted in a mutually beneficial increase in business. We also have a dedicated sales team providing support.

WHY SHOULD AGENTS SELL CRUISE RATHER THAN A LAND HOLIDAY?

A cruise offers a relaxing way of seeing more of a destination – particularly river cruise as the ship moors up in city and town centres or close to famous sights. A developing trend is for customers to extend a cruise with a city stay or tour and our product range reflects this demand. Our expanded choice of ocean, coastal and river cruise packages includes cruise and stay options. There are significant earning opportunities in selling cruises for agents.

TOP THREE SALES TIPS FOR TRAVEL AGENTS SELLING CRUISE

1 With such a broad range available now, it's essential to discuss the type of experience your customers are looking for and what their budget is.

2 You can offer the best ocean or river options with cruise lines to see what the best value will be for them with more included.

3 A number of cruise lines offer pre-bookable excursion packages, city stays or tours and cabin upgrades to enhance your customer's holiday.

A SUMMER OF DISCOVERIES

AWARD-WINNING SMALL SHIP DISCOVERY CRUISES
FROM MAY – NOVEMBER 2017

BOOK THE CABIN OF YOUR CHOICE BY 31ST AUGUST 2016

SUMMER

SAVE
UP TO
20%

HOLIDAY

NO-FLY CRUISE ⚓



Blue Lagoon, Iceland

ICELANDIC INSIGHTS

DEPARTING 31ST MAY 2017
15-DAYS

PRICE PER PERSON FROM

£1,574

ENGLAND | FAROE ISLANDS | ICELAND

FLY CRUISE ✈



Kotor Bay, Montenegro

SPARKLING ADRIATIC

DEPARTING 18TH AUGUST 2017
14-DAYS

PRICE PER PERSON FROM

£1,439

ITALY | CROATIA
MONTENEGRO | GREECE

FLY CRUISE ✈



Symi, Greece

GREEK ISLAND MEZE

DEPARTING 31ST AUGUST 2017
12-DAYS

PRICE PER PERSON FROM

£1,439

GREECE | TURKEY

YOUR CRUISE INCLUDES:

- ✓ Flights and transfers on all overseas cruises
- ✓ Onboard gratuities and service charges
- ✓ All meals with open-seated dining in a choice of restaurants
- ✓ Afternoon tea each day
- ✓ Captain's welcome and farewell cocktail parties with gala dinners
- ✓ Lively Talks by Guest Speakers
- ✓ Onboard entertainment, workshops and activities
- ✓ All port and airport taxes
- ✓ Chauffeur service or meet and greet airport parking for higher grade cabins
- ✓ Complimentary car parking at Portsmouth on no-fly cruises
- ✓ Complimentary coach transfers between London Victoria and Voyager
- ✓ Facilities including a library, gym, plunge pool, hot tubs, spa with sauna, duty free shop and a choice of bars

VOYAGES *of* DISCOVERY

FOR LIFE'S ADVENTURE

All fares and offers apply to new bookings only, are correct as of 30th June 2016, are subject to availability and may be withdrawn at any time. No retrospective discounts can be applied. Fares are based on twin occupancy bookings. Save 10% on Inside cabins, save 15% on Outside cabins and save 20% on Balcony cabins. Only Standard Fare bookings will qualify for a 5% Discovery Club discount if you have sailed with Voyages of Discovery before. Cruise extensions and shore excursions have an additional cost, limited capacity and are subject to availability. In some instances cruise extensions and shore excursions cannot operate without minimum numbers. Should the minimum number not be reached and the extension/excursion be cancelled, Voyages of Discovery will refund the monies paid for the individual extension/ shore excursion. A deposit of £300 per passenger or 15% of the total fare due, whichever is highest (or full payment for bookings taken within 119 days of departure) is due on booking. A higher amount may be payable if any supplier(s) require additional payments for a service prior to the balance due date. You will be informed of this at time of booking. Payment of a deposit means acceptance of the Fair Trading Conditions. The Company takes no responsibility for credit card or foreign currency transaction processing fees levied by issuing banks. Where appropriate a flight supplement will be applied, and this will be advised at the time of booking. Travel insurance is not included, however, we strongly recommend that you take out travel insurance at time of booking. Full booking terms and conditions apply, see Voyages of Discovery April 2016 brochure for details. Your booking is ATOL protected if a flight is included. Selected cruises may require a visa prior to departure. It is the responsibility of all passengers to check and fulfill visa requirements applicable to their itinerary. Our Consular Services Department can obtain visas for British citizens for the countries that require them prior to departure. Data Protection - Voyages of Discovery is part of All Leisure Holidays. The information we hold about you will be used to deal with your enquiry or booking, provide you with our latest news and offers or invite you to take part in research. We may also share your information with other All Leisure Holidays companies who may occasionally contact you about products and services we feel may be of interest to you. For further information and full terms and conditions, please see brochure or the Voyages of Discovery Privacy Policy at www.voyagesofdiscovery.co.uk

ACCESSIBLE CRUISES

BREAK DOWN BARRIERS FOR CLIENTS AND RECOMMEND A CRUISE ON ONE OF THESE ACCESSIBLE SHIPS



1 CRYSTAL CRUISES CRYSTAL SERENITY

Designed to be welcoming for passengers with mobility issues, there is ramp access to most decks and public areas, plus wheelchair spaces in the theatre. Serenity has eight dedicated cabins and suites for wheelchair users, which can be booked prior to boarding. They feature extra-wide doors, fully wheelchair-accessible bathrooms, and wardrobes with low-fitted hangars. Some general suites also offer bathrooms with wheelchair access. The ship's lifts can accommodate wheelchairs and scooters, allowing access to all public decks.

crystalcruises.co.uk | 0207 399 7601



2 CARNIVAL CRUISE LINE CARNIVAL VISTA

There are 65 adapted cabins on Carnival Vista, the line's latest ship, which debuted in May. The specially designed staterooms are available in two categories - modified and accessible. Modified cabins are for guests who use a wheelchair or mobility aid and include features such as grab bars and shower seats in the bathroom. Accessible cabins are ideal for wheelchair users and include ample turning space, clear routes throughout the cabin and a fully accessible bathroom. Lifts include buttons within reach of wheelchair-bound passengers and audible signals for the sight impaired.

carnival.co.uk | 0843 374 2272

0800 328 1699
www.mobilityatsea.co.uk



Mobil



3

FRED. OLSEN CRUISES
BALMORAL

Fred. Olsen is a firm favourite with older British cruisers and is well-equipped to accommodate passengers using wheelchairs and mobility scooters. Balmoral has nine adapted cabins, the biggest number in the fleet, with wide doors and grab rails and a fixed seat in the bathrooms. Additional mattresses can be provided in all cabins to elevate the height of the bed and raised toilet seats are available. Passengers are welcome to bring additional equipment, such as hoists. Hearing loops are fitted in the show lounge, with headsets available from guest services.

fredolsencruises.com | 0800 0355 242

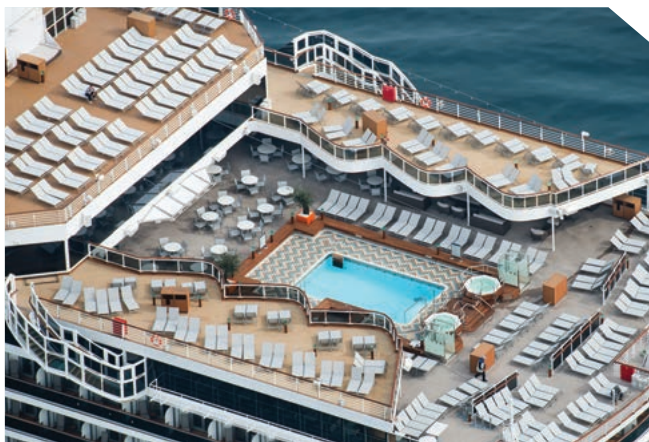


1

ROYAL CARIBBEAN
HARMONY OF THE SEAS

The world's largest cruise ship has 46 accessible cabins with wider doors, turning spaces, beds with open bed frames and fully accessible bathrooms with grab rails, shower seat and lower sinks. Other cabin amenities include lower vanity areas, amplified phones and captioned TVs. All onboard dining venues, bars and lounges offer wheelchair access and seating. Portable room kits are available for the hard of hearing that provide alerts for door knocking, telephone ringing, alarm clock and smoke detector. The ship also features Braille signage and large print menus.

royalcaribbean.co.uk | 0844 571 9999



5

HOLLAND AMERICA LINE
KONINGS DAM

There are 28 accessible cabins in every category - inside, outside and deluxe balcony suites - on Holland America's newest vessel, Koningsdam, and all public rooms, lifts and toilets are wheelchair accessible. The line's wheelchair-accessible tender transfer system is unique and makes boarding tender boats much easier for passengers with limited mobility. Computer software in the Explorations Cafe can read text on the Internet to cruisers with impaired vision. Facilities for the hard of hearing include amplified phones, visual alert alarms and captioned TVs.

hollandamerica.com | 0844 338 8600



6

DISNEY CRUISE LINE
DISNEY DREAM

With its strong family appeal, Disney is a very inclusive line and every effort is made to accommodate youngsters with disabilities, including autistic and special needs children who can join in the youth programme, subject to certain conditions. And if a child's condition means they are unable to queue to meet a Disney character someone else can wait in their place. Disney Dream has 25 disabled cabins that are fully equipped for wheelchair passengers and in-cabin communication kits are available for the hard of hearing.

disnycruise.disneygo.com | 0800 171 2317

ityatSea



**We make cruising
more accessible for all.**

RESORT STAYS IN BORA BORA AND LE TAHA'A

LAND

ITINERARY:
4 NIGHTS FOUR SEASONS
BORA BORA, 3 NIGHTS LE TAHA'A'S
ISLAND RESORT & SPA

NUMBER OF NIGHTS:

7

NUMBER OF ISLANDS VISITED:

2 (Bora Bora, Taha'a)

FLIGHTS:

Round-trip fare from Los Angeles: £1240

INTER-ISLAND AIRFARE:

£105+

**TRANSFERS FROM HOTELS AND
AIRPORTS:**

Included

INCLUDED MEALS:

Breakfasts, remaining meals up to
£70pppd

Non-alcoholic beverages, beer and select
wines and spirits: Up to £55pppd

ENTERTAINMENT:

Additional charge

WATERSPORTS:

Additional charge between \$90-100/£62-
70pp per trip

PRIVATE BEACHES:

N/A

ADDITIONAL CHARGES:

Up to £1878 per person

TOTAL:

Resort costs £2800 +
Additional charges £1878
= £4678 per person



Society Islands

FRENCH P

THIS TIME WE COMPARE SIMILAR LAND
AND WATER HOLIDAYS IN FRENCH
POLYNESIA

The itineraries are provided by Paul Gauguin Cruises and compare its Tahiti & The Society Islands cruise with four nights at the Four Seasons in Bora Bora and three nights in the Le Taha'a Island Resort and Spa, Taha'a.

The Paul Gauguin package is £4,110 per person based on a January 14, 2017 departure, and the land option works out at £2,800 per person. However, when you add on the extras at the hotels (£1,878 per person) it comes to £4,678 per person, making it over £500 more expensive than the water option. Michael Dupont, head of sales, Paul Gauguin Cruises said: "A cruise can provide much better value for your guests, especially in some more remote destinations where access is more difficult and food, drinks and other amenities have to be imported. The South Pacific is a prime example of this. We get a very high percentage of enquiries from new-to-cruise passengers for this reason – Paul Gauguin offers extremely good value in the South Pacific with the ease of travelling between islands, the all-inclusive dining, drinks and gratuities and the added exclusivity of a day on their very own private island, complete with BBQ, floating bar and watersports"

Bora Bora

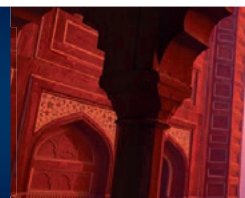


Polynesian dancers

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OLYNESIA



Diving excursion with Paul Gauguin Cruises



UNIWORLD
BOUTIQUE RIVER CRUISE COLLECTION®

**PAUL GAUGUIN
CRUISES**

WATER

**ITINERARY:
TAHITI AND THE
SOCIETY ISLANDS**

NUMBER OF NIGHTS:

7

NUMBER OF ISLANDS VISITED:

5 (Bora Bora, Huahine, Moorea, Tahiti, Taha'a)

FLIGHTS:

Round-trip fare from Los Angeles included

INTER-ISLAND AIRFARE:

N/A

**TRANSFERS FROM HOTELS AND
AIRPORTS:**

Included

INCLUDED MEALS:

All breakfasts, lunches and dinners, plus room service
Non-alcoholic beverages, beer and select wines and spirits: included

ENTERTAINMENT:

Lectures and live entertainment daily, plus special guests on selected voyages

WATERSPORTS:

Included

PRIVATE BEACHES:

Motu Mahana and Bora Bora

ADDITIONAL CHARGES:

N/A

TOTAL:

£4110



Paul Gauguin Cruises

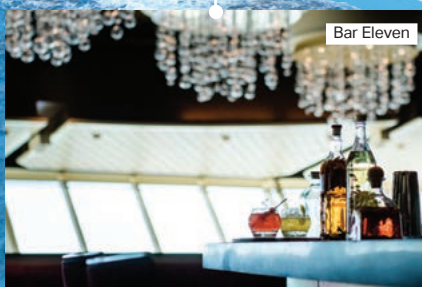
TUI DISCOVERY

Thomson Cruises recently welcomed TUI Discovery to its fleet. A new type of ship for the company, bearing the TUI name, rather than Thomson.



FAMILY FACILITIES

- The Wall - a climbing wall with sea views
- Mini golf
- The Hideout - a teen room with karaoke booth
- Baby Centre - changing facilities, food preparation area and somewhere safe to play
- Children's show - Splash Live!
- Team game Break Out & Escape - a real-life room escape



BARS

- Bar Eleven - contemporary cocktail bar on deck 11
- Venue - hi-tech evening entertainment. LED screens accompany family-focussed game shows and performances from virtual bands
- Live Room - spacious and modern with biggest selection of on-tap beers
- Atrium Bar - low key bar with views of the Atrium
- Coffee Port - contemporary coffeehouse in a quiet area
- Two pool bars on decks 9 and 10 - indoor and outdoor

FITNESS AND WELLNESS

- Oceans Gym
- Oceans Spa & Beauty Salon
- Jogging track
- Shops
- 2 Pools



CABINS

- 915 cabins – all with air-conditioning, hairdryer, flatscreen TV, wardrobe space, tea and coffee-making facilities, safe
- 1 royal suite
- 5 executive suites
- 12 grand suites



Cabin



Gallery 47

DINING VENUES

Four breakfast, seven lunch and seven dinner venues

- Gallery 47° – located in the upstairs of the main restaurant, serving contemporary Italian food
- 47° – contemporary international waiter service restaurant
- Kora La – à la carte Pan-Asian restaurant and sushi bar. Celebrity chef and restaurateur Ian Pengelley oversees the menu
- Steakhouse Surf & Turf – à la carte restaurant
- Islands – main buffet restaurant with show-cooking stations, carvery roasts and snacks in between meals
- The Glass House – quieter adult-focussed venue: a deli/juice bar during the day and a bistro-style destination serving tapas during the evening

FAST FACTS

264 metres
(866 feet) long

32 metres
(105 feet) wide

69.130 gross
tonnes

Capacity of
1,830 (double
occupancy)

915 cabins

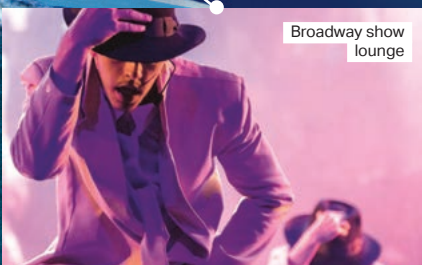
11 decks

761 crew

7 restaurants

8 bars

2 pools



Broadway show
lounge

ENTERTAINMENT

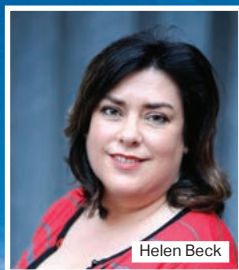
- Broadway Show Lounge
- Movies by Moonlight
- Live Casino
- Live Room
- Atrium

And back home again!

t: 0843 0843 003



IT'S ALL BECOMING CRYSTAL CLEAR



Helen Beck

CRYSTAL CRUISES IS ON THE BRINK OF A TRULY SPECTACULAR EXPANSION WITH THE LAUNCH OF A RIVER DIVISION, PLUS THE CONSTRUCTION OF THREE LUXURIOUS OCEAN VESSELS AND AN IMPRESSIVE EXPEDITION YACHT – NOT TO MENTION GROWTH FOR CRYSTAL LUXURY AIR AND PLANS TO REVIVE THE SS UNITED STATES. HELEN BECK, VICE PRESIDENT OF INTERNATIONAL SALES AND MARKETING, IS AT THE CENTRE OF THE ACTION IN THE UK

BY JOHN HONEYWELL



Crystal Symphony,
Whitsundays

There has never been a more exciting time for Crystal Cruises – repeatedly hailed by its President and CEO, Edie Rodriguez, as the “world’s most awarded luxury cruise line”.

Under her energetic leadership, and financed by an investment of billions of dollars, which seems to be just small change to new owners Genting HK, it is being expanded and transformed into the “world’s

most luxurious hospitality and lifestyle brand portfolio”.

Casino operator Genting, which owns 40 clubs in the UK as well as resorts and hotels around the world, is involved in Hong Kong-based Star Cruises and new Asian cruise line Dream. Genting also retains a stake in Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings.

But it is Crystal that has attracted most of the attention, the headlines, and the investment since it was bought from

Japanese shipping company NYK for \$550 million in 2015.

Rapid expansion brings with it a requirement for new executives to take charge of new businesses. Helen Beck is one of a raft of high-powered women brought in by Rodriguez.

She arrived at Crystal in February after a 15-year stint at Royal Caribbean, but her life in travel began even before she completed her education at school in York and 6th form

Crystal Mozart
Christening



Waterside
restaurant, Crystal
Mozart



CRYSTAL'S GROWTH PLANS

The Crystal Cruises ocean fleet comprises 922-passenger Crystal Symphony and the 1,070-capacity Crystal Serenity. They were joined in December last year by the 62-passenger luxury yacht Crystal Esprit, which sails in The Seychelles during the winter months and spends summer in the Adriatic.

River Crystal Exclusive Class:

Three 1,000-passenger ships, each carrying 1,000 crew and including a deck of private residences, with the first ship launching in 2019.

Crystal River Cruises:

Crystal Mozart, the largest river cruise ship in Europe, has been reconfigured for just 154 guests and was christened in Vienna earlier this month (See pages 30-31). Six newbuild river cruise yachts have been ordered from the Lloyd-Werft shipyard in Germany.

Crystal Endeavor:

A 200-passenger expedition vessel with ice-strengthened hull and equipped with helicopters and submarines, arriving in 2018.

Crystal Luxury Air:

A Bombardier Global Express XRS aircraft joined the fleet in April. Next year sees the launch of Crystal AirCruises with an 88-seat Boeing 777-200LR that will fly 14 and 28 day round-the-world itineraries.

SS United States

In February, Crystal announced plans to restore the SS United States – holder of the Blue Riband for the fastest Transatlantic crossing, and built at huge expense with US Government funding in case it was ever needed as a troopship. A feasibility study is due to be completed by the end of the year.

Crystal Esprit,
Seychelles



college in Scunthorpe.

Her first foreign holiday was with her parents – who ran pubs and hotels – and sister to Tunisia, where she remembers an uncomfortable ride on a grumpy camel. Undeterred, she later worked as a holiday rep in Benidorm, and at ski resorts in Austria and Andorra.

"I decided that the best way to improve my language skills was to live and work in those countries rather than study at university, so I spent 12 years in Europe, primarily as a holiday representative. Working directly with guests and local suppliers enabled me to develop strong interpersonal and decision-making skills and formed the foundation for my future career in travel," she says.

Roles with travel agencies later led to a position as International Leisure Sales Manager with Copthorne Hotels, focussing on promoting properties in the Asia-Pacific region.

Helen joined Royal Caribbean International in 2000, controlling a \$5 million annual sales and marketing budget which she and her team employed to bring in 100,000 guests and \$100 million revenue from 45 countries throughout EMEA.

She believes Crystal has "a very clear vision of its future", and adds: "The expansion of our ocean brand along with the launch of our yacht, river and air brands was very appealing along with the opportunity to be part of this at the start of the growth."

"I have the pleasure of working with our amazing professional partners and team around the world in getting across the message about all things Crystal and how we are growing. There is a clear opportunity to increase our business from international markets [outside the US] and my role is to develop the strategies and support needed to make that happen."

"The UK is a very important market for us. Every partner I have spoken with recognises the opportunities that our brand expansions bring and are very supportive."

"As we diversify, it means that we talk to different segments of travellers who may well not have considered Crystal before. However, given the range of our offering now, our partners can approach them with one or more of our brands. We need our travel agent partners to continue to be passionate about all things Crystal and to enjoy introducing our new offerings to their clients."



**CRYSTAL
RIVER CRUISES™**

RIVER CRUISE LUXURY – WITHOUT COMPROMISE



Crystal Cruises has introduced the world's first luxury river cruise line, Crystal River Cruises, which will offer the hallmarks of the all-inclusive cruise line's experience – six-star service, world-class dining and enriching excursions – and an unrivalled new standard of all-inclusive luxury exploring the grand waterways of Europe. Crystal River Cruises brings you the largest suites and highest guests-to-staff ratio of any river vessel, a slower approach to river cruising with more overnights in port – allowing plenty of time to explore – and the outstanding six-star service that you have come to expect from Crystal Cruises.

At the recent ship launch in Vienna, Ms

Elisabeth Gürtler broke the customary bottle of champagne against Crystal Mozart's bow, officially becoming Godmother to Crystal's first luxury river yacht. Ms Gürtler is no stranger to the finer nuances of luxury travel, as the managing director of Vienna's most famous hotel, the Hotel Sacher.

With her maiden voyage on July 13 2016, the 158-guest Crystal Mozart is sailing two distinct itineraries of 10 and 11 nights along the Danube, plus a special 13-night Christmas and New Year's Eve voyage. Crystal Mozart's itineraries offer distinct experiences designed to showcase each destination and, for the first time on a Crystal voyage, most excursions will be complimentary. State-of-the-art technology also takes independent

exploration to entirely new levels with complimentary Nordic Walking Poles, GPS Whisper Guides, electronically assisted bikes and more.

Crystal Mozart offers spacious and stylish suites, public lounges and dining venues, and boasts innovative entertainment spaces and adventurous amenities. Among the more exceptional touches on the refurbished river yacht are a pop-up bar area on the top 'Vista' deck, complete with a vanishing movie screen for al fresco evening show times. Also on the Vista deck will be a living rooftop garden area with teak bench seating areas for guests to enjoy nature as they sail along the Danube. Two custom tender boats will be available on board for more intimate exploration of



Suite



Spa



Crystal Mozart, Budapest

the waterway's picturesque locations, plus abundant outdoor space ensuring that travellers don't miss any of the magnificent views.

The beautiful suites on board all feature king-size beds, Nespresso machines, 40-inch flat-screen televisions and sparkling marble bathrooms. The Crystal Mozart has window suites of 219 square feet, deluxe suites with French Balcony of 219 square feet, penthouse suites of 330 square feet and a two-bedroom Crystal Suite of 883 square feet, the largest suite on any river vessel afloat. One-bedroom Penthouses and the two-bedroom Crystal Suite feature French Balconies, walk-in closets and separate showers, and oversized bathtubs. Crystal's acclaimed butler service is

also available with every guest suite.

The ship's four main decks offer numerous public areas for guests to enjoy onboard enrichment, fitness and wellness, and world-class dining. Crystal Mozart offers guests an array of elegant and casual dining options throughout the day.

Crystal Mozart also features fully-equipped fitness, spa and salon facilities at the Crystal Life Spa, marking the first time ever the spa on a Crystal ship will be operated and staffed by Crystal's own trained crew. An indoor pool will complement two treatment rooms and male and female sauna and steam rooms.

Four new all-suite vessels will then debut in June and August 2017, offering voyages

on the Seine; the Rhine; the Garonne and Dordogne rivers and the Gironde Estuary; and the Rhine, Main and Danube rivers. The beautiful itineraries will offer a fresh take on traditional river cruising, focusing on longer and overnight stays and daytime cruising, in addition to sailing less-travelled routes to avoid congestion of other vessels in port.

Aboard the Crystal River Cruises fleet – Crystal Mozart, Crystal Debussy™, Crystal Bach™, Crystal Ravel™ and Crystal Mahler™ – nothing is compromised, no detail too small, no experience too much.

For further information, or to make your River Cruises booking, please call 020 7399 7604 or visit crystalcruises.co.uk

Cuba and the Caribbean

NOW THAT THE HALF-CENTURY TRADE EMBARGO HAS BEEN LIFTED, CUBA, THAT FILM-SET ISLAND OF VINTAGE CARS, FINE CIGARS AND MOJITO BARS, IS THE LATEST KID ON THE BLOCK TO ATTRACT AN INFLUX OF CRUISE TRAVELLERS

BY GILLY PICKUP

Playa Giron, Cuba. This beach is famous for its role during the Bay of Pigs invasion.



The largest, most diverse Caribbean island is one of the hottest destinations right now. No wonder tourists are adding Cuba to their bucket list. Some cruise lines are making it the high spot on their schedules, while others include it in Caribbean itineraries to give travellers a taste of what this intriguing country has to offer.

Carnival Corporation's newest brand, Fathom, made history on May 2 this year. The arrival of a Fathom vessel in Havana from Miami marked the first time in over 50 years that a U.S. cruise line had sailed from the U.S. to Cuba. Passengers on the historic inaugural voyage were greeted with festivities on arrival in Havana, the first of three destinations, including Cienfuegos and Santiago de Cuba, that guests visit as part of the brand's seven-night voyages to the island. Fathom's 704-passenger Adonia now operates week-long itineraries to the Caribbean island every other week. "Our arrival in Havana was a special moment in history that contributes to a more positive future," said Arnold Donald, CEO of Carnival Corporation. "As we worked

to become the first U.S. cruise company to sail from the U.S. to Cuba in more than five decades, it was clear just how much interest there is from travellers who want to experience Cuba." Tara Russell, president of Fathom and global impact lead for Carnival Corporation, said, "Cuba has great people and a rich history and we are excited and humbled by this historic opportunity to give Fathom travellers a chance to experience this unique destination."

As part of sailings in this inaugural year, passenger onboard experiences include Cuban and Caribbean-inspired food, films, music, dancing and conversational Spanish lessons.

Celestyal Cruises announced earlier this year that the 1200-passenger Crystal will sail year-round from Cuba thanks to increased demand. From November 2016, she will sail round the island for seven nights before returning to Havana. "Our mid-sized ship Crystal is able to access smaller ports to showcase the best of Cuba, with April being the perfect month to enjoy the beaches and dive spots," said Pythagoras Nagos, vice president sales for Celestyal Cruises. For

the upcoming 2016/17 season, port of call Punta Frances will replace Maria La Gorda on the itinerary. Located on the Isla de la Juventud (Isle of Youth), Punta Frances is a great destination for swimming, sunbathing and snorkelling. Celestyal's revised Cuba itinerary launches on November 21, 2016 with embarkation options in Havana, Cuba or Montego Bay, Jamaica.

Travellers can also embark in Havana with both MSC's Armonia and Opera on their seven and 14-night winter 2016/17 and 2017/18 cruises. Armonia will operate from November 2016 to March 2017 and again from December 2017 to March 2018, while Opera will operate from December 2016 though to April 2018. Tim Stocker, digital marketing manager, said, "These cruises are popular – hence the use of two ships catering for over 2,000 passengers each. We have tailored itineraries to allow for a two-night stay in Havana, a bonus for those keen to sample the city."

Based in Montego Bay from November 2016 to March 2017, Thomson Dream will sail to Cuba on seven-night itineraries, berthing in Havana for two days during every sailing. ➤



2017 PREVIEW

BROCHURE OUT NOW



THE WORLD'S ONLY AUTHENTIC BOUTIQUE CRUISE LINE™

NEW SHIP

Experience Uniworld's
S.S. Joie de Vivre, our
newest boutique Super Ship.

TWO NEW ALL-INCLUSIVE CRUISES

- Paris & Impressions
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- Rhine-Main Discovery
& Munich

Uniworld takes a bold step forward in 2017, offering a host of enhancements that make our award-winning, all-inclusive boutique river cruises in Europe more enticing than ever. Discover what makes us "Uniquely Uniworld" – book early for best selection of accommodations and 2017 departures.

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Book your clients 2017
European river cruise by
31 August 2016 and save up
to £2,300 per couple*.

VIP SERVICE

Travel in style and luxury,
with concierge services
and 24-hour room service.



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You deserve the best



*Early-Booking Saving of £2,300 per couple is based on Ultimate European Journey itinerary, twin share in a Suite if booked by 31 Aug 2016.





Cruise & Maritime's Marco Polo and latest fleet addition Columbus are also set to call at Cuba in 2017 as part of 35-night and 46-night round-trip voyages from Bristol and Tilbury. Both allow passengers the chance to overnight in Havana. Delighted with the confirmed level of bookings from the company's preview brochure, Mike Hall, head of marketing, said, "The trade and public realise that lifting trade restrictions and acceptance of cruise ships make Cuba an attractive port in our itineraries. We expect both our departures to sell out."

It's not all about Cuba, though. The rest of the Caribbean remains popular as ever with cruise passengers. Crystal Serenity's 14-night itineraries starting November / December are a welcome break from the British winter. Beginning or ending with an overnight in New Orleans, they call at destinations including the British Virgin Islands and French West Indies. Crystal president and CEO Edie Rodriguez said, "Many guests live in areas that are cold by October and these itineraries are the perfect escape." The November 8 departure offers special low fares for solo travellers and complimentary third berths for kids under 17, while the December 6 departure is just the ticket for golf enthusiasts, offering instruction, workshops and golf-related excursions.

Starting November 2016, P&O Cruises offers 7 / 14-night Caribbean fly-cruise itineraries on flagship Britannia, which will run until March 2017. Meanwhile, Seabourn Odyssey will begin a 12-day Caribbean programme in 2017, sailing from Barbados to Ft. Lauderdale. The Extended Explorations programme continues for the 2016/17 season, offering guests the extra perk of choosing – to a certain extent – where and when they sail. Other benefits include 10% savings for combined cruises and frequent overnights in ports. New in 2017 for Caribbean Princess is a 14-day Circle Caribbean voyage.

There's another chance to spend the day on a private island with Holland America's Koningsdam. The 10-night Southern Seafarer round trip departs Fort Lauderdale on various dates in November/December 2016 and February/March 2017, calling at ports in Curacao, Bonaire, Aruba and Half Moon Cay, Bahamas. Departing 15 December this year, Silversea's Silver Spirit sets sail on a 7-day pre-Christmas round-trip voyage from Barbados with maiden call at the port of Le Marin, Martinique.

* SELL IT



Thomson Cruises offers a seven-night Cuban Fusion cruise on Thomson Dream departing Montego Bay, Jamaica, on November 29, 2016. Stops include Cozumel, Havana and Georgetown (Grand Cayman). Price from £1132pp for inside cabin including return flights.

0871 230 2800 thomson.co.uk/cruise

MSC offers a seven-night cruise on MSC Armonia departing Havana on November 22, 2016. The ship stays for two nights in Havana before sailing to Montego Bay, Georgetown (Cayman Islands) and Cozumel (Mexico), and then returning to Havana. Prices from £419pp for inside cabin, excluding flights.

0203 426 3010, msccruises.co.uk

Celestyal Cruises' revised Cuban itinerary starts November 21, 2016 with seven-night cruises departing Havana or Montego Bay, calling at Cuban ports Punta Frances, Cienfuegos and Santiago de Cuba. Cruises will run until end 2017. Prices from £981pp including drinks and shorex package, but excluding flights.

001 855 364 4999, yourcubacruise.com



* SALES TIPS

1. Encourage clients to book Caribbean cruises as far ahead as possible. Scheduled airline fares tend to increase closer to departure. Therefore it makes sense to book early.

2. A major selling point for companies including Princess Cruises, Norwegian and HAL is that passengers can spend a day on the line's private Caribbean island.

3. Up-sell to clients by offering them the chance to upgrade to a balcony cabin or a suite. Sometimes price differences are fairly marginal.

4. Medical insurance is compulsory for tourists visiting Cuba. All cruise line passengers must show proof of medical insurance at time of boarding. Those who are unable to provide this may be denied boarding and will receive no refund.

5. Arrange a tailor-made cruise-and-stay package for clients. Most Caribbean cruises require night pre-cruise stay but suggest clients stay at least a couple of nights before sailing. Besides helping them to recover from a long-haul flight, it offers the chance to experience the destination.

Star value cruises...

All-inclusive and sailing soon!

There's still time for your customers to join these fantastic value cruises, which include a chauffeur to the port, selected drinks on board and much more! Aboard Saga's small, welcoming ships, they'll enjoy comfortable accommodation, sumptuous cuisine and superb amenities – but hurry, cabins are selling fast!

Saga's cruises include all this:

- Return chauffeur to the port, up to 250 miles each way[^], or free parking
- Optional travel insurance provided by Cigna Insurance Services (Europe) Limited & additional cancellation rights, or a reduction if not required
- Tips to all on-board staff
- Selected drinks[#]
- 24-hour room service
- Free Wi-Fi internet
- Daily afternoon tea
- Free shuttle bus in most ports

... and much more!



W8164 / W8179

\$A reduction of £100 applies to Tobago stay and cruise and a reduction of £40 applies to Christmas Markets if you do not need the optional insurance and additional cancellation rights - call for details. †Includes three nights in a hotel and one night aboard aircraft. ‡Fares are per person based on two people sharing an Inside Guarantee.

Fares were correct at the time of going to print and are subject to availability and change. Other cabin grades (including singles) are available. ^Private chauffeur service for distances of up to 75 miles each way or a shared chauffeur service from 76-250 miles, please call for full details. Please also call for further information on Inside/Outside

Guarantees and for details of the cabin guide and deck plans. #All inclusive aboard Saga Pearl II and Saga Sapphire includes selected wines at lunch and dinner, Saga house-branded spirits, cocktails containing house-branded spirits, draught beer and lager, non-alcoholic cocktails, all mixers and soft drinks. † Land by launch or tender. All excursions mentioned are optional, at an additional cost and are subject to availability and change. Some of the highlights detailed may only be seen on optional excursions or by exploring independently. Terms and conditions for £100 Shopping Voucher Cruise Incentive: To qualify, book any Saga Ocean Cruise. Simply email incentives@saga.co.uk with your ABTA, full name and booking reference within seven days of confirming the booking. For full details visit saga.co.uk/agents. **NHA-CC2738**



new

Tobago stay and cruise

November 18, 2016 ■ 3 nights in a hotel and 15 nights aboard Saga Pearl II

All inclusive[#]

19[†] nights from **£3,499[‡]**

including optional travel insurance provided by Cigna Insurance Services (Europe) Limited or a reduction of £100 if not required[§]

INCLUDING... Selected drinks[#] ■ Travel to and from Gatwick ■ Return flights and transfers ■ Three-night all-inclusive hotel stay ■ Optional travel insurance and additional cancellation rights, or a reduction if not required[§] ■ All gratuities on board ■ All meals and entertainment on board.

Enjoy a three-night stay in tropical Tobago before embarking Saga Pearl II and exploring more enchanting islands including Cuba, where we've included two ports, plus given you two full days to discover the colourful capital. You can extend your holiday with a three-night stay in Antigua if you wish.

Calling at... London • Tobago Plantation Estate, Tobago - three-night hotel stay • Scarborough, Tobago • Isla de Margarita, Venezuela • Willemstad, Curaçao • Port Antonio, Jamaica • Santiago de Cuba, Cuba • Havana, Cuba • Grand Turk J, Turks and Caicos Islands • Spanish Town J, Virgin Gorda, British Virgin Islands • St John's, Antigua • London.

Cruise code: P165B.

TRAVEL INFORMATION: Fly economy class from Gatwick to Tobago and return from Antigua to Gatwick with the scheduled services of British Airways.

Christmas Markets

December 15, 2016 ■ 5 nights aboard Saga Sapphire

All inclusive[#]

5 nights from **£746[‡]**

including optional travel insurance provided by Cigna Insurance Services (Europe) Limited or a reduction of £40 if not required[§]

INCLUDING... Selected drinks[#] ■ Travel to and from Southampton ■ Optional travel insurance and additional cancellation rights, or a reduction if not required[§] ■ All gratuities on board ■ All meals and entertainment on board.

Relish the festive markets of Bremen and Bruges, scented with freshly-baked gingerbread and hot Glühwein, and soak up the culture of the vibrant city of Amsterdam.

Calling at... Southampton • Bremerhaven (for Bremen), Germany • IJmuiden (for Amsterdam), Netherlands • Zeebrugge (for Bruges), Belgium • Southampton. **Cruise code:** SA309.

Call **FREE** on **0800 074 8021** or visit saga.co.uk/agents
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The Mekong river

CRUISE LINES ARE EMBRACING THE TREND TOWARDS
DESTINATION IMMERSION WITH MORE CRUISE AND
STAY OPTIONS TO TARGET FIRST-TIME CRUISERS

SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO?

BY ANGELA CRONIN

Whether it is adding two or three days on to the beginning or end of a cruise, or opting to have a 14-day combination with seven days' sailing and seven days on land, cruise and stay packages are growing in popularity year on year.

Lynn Narraway, UK managing director of Seabourn and Holland America Line, said cruise and stay holidays are a great way for agents to introduce clients to cruising.

"At Seabourn, we work with tour operators, such as Abercrombie and Kent and ITC Classics, to put together luxury sea and land-based itineraries, and these types of experiences have a 50% repeat rate for Seabourn," said Narraway.

"And we also work with agents, such as Reader Offers Limited, Six Star Cruises and The Cruise Line, who put together luxury packages."

Narraway said that a journey on the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express added on to the beginning or end of a voyage has proved to be particularly appealing to new-to-cruise clients, as well as voyages that include pre or post-cruise safari experiences in Africa.

Reader Offers Limited has a 13-night

itinerary that includes a nine-day Seabourn cruise from Athens to the Greek destinations of Katakolon and Syvota, Brindisi in Italy, and Dubrovnik and Primosten in Croatia, with a four-night stay in Venice and a return overnight journey to London on the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express for £7,399 per person based on a May 19 2017 departure.

Abercrombie and Kent product manager Charlotte Webb said the tour operator has seen rising demand for more cruises that focus on destination immersion, which had prompted the tailor-made specialist to strike up new partnerships with cruise lines.

Webb said A&K decided to team up with Azamara Club Cruises because its smaller ships and overnight stays in ports appeal to A&K's demographic of clients. The operator features a five-night Monaco Grand Prix Voyage with Azamara that leads in at £1,980 per person including flights, all meals, drinks and gratuities, with stops at Saint-Tropez, Cannes, Florence, Pisa and Monte Carlo for the Grand Prix.

With the eyes of the industry focused on the launch of Regent Seven Seas's newest ship, the 750-passenger Seven Seas Explorer, A&K has joined forces with the luxury line to put together a small selection of cruise and



Venice



"In September 2015 we launched our first tour combining an eight-night river cruise with land-based touring before and afterwards. And more recently we have added the 16-day Mekong and Beyond tour, which has been incredibly popular with first-time cruisers."

stay options.

These include the 16-night Beijing to Bangkok experience, which features overnights in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and Bangkok, with prices leading in at £6,250pp based on a March 23 2017 departure.

Another luxury line to get in on the cruise and stay act is Silversea, which has its own Land Adventures, in long-haul destinations that the cruise line said always enjoy high demand from its UK customers. Passengers on Silver Galapagos often book the line's four-night Machu Picchu Grande Explore programme, which costs £3,229pp and includes an overnight stay in Lima, a journey on the luxurious Hiram Bingham train to the Lost City of the Incas and an overnight stay in Machu Picchu Sanctuary Lodge, before departing to Cusco for an overnight stay and a flight to board Silversea Galapagos.

Cosmos has just launched its Cruise brochure for 2017, combining ocean, coastal and river cruise for the first time as well as the widest choice of cruise and stay options to meet demand from this growing market.

Product and commercial manager Daniel Harris said that cruise and stay can really add to the holiday experience. "Being able to spend more time in a city or enjoy a rail journey through incredible scenery can only enhance a holiday. In particular, for river cruise, we have grown the range of land or city extensions available next year to include Amsterdam, Bordeaux, Moscow, St Petersburg, Porto, Seville, Venice, Dubrovnik, Venice and Vienna."

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines has cruise



Machu Picchu





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Budapest

and stay programmes that are available on selected Grand Voyages. On its 21-night South American Expedition on Boudicca that departs on February 5, the cruise line offers a four-night pre-cruise stay in Buenos Aires and Iguacu for a visit to the falls that includes two nights in each destination. Prices start at £1,499pp for the pre-cruise stay.

Riviera Travel offers cruise and stay options on three of its river cruise itineraries. These include: the Blue Danube; Rhine Cruise to Switzerland; and the Douro, Oporto and Salamanca.

Head of agency sales Joseph Grimley said: "Over the years clients have expressed an interest in extending their river cruise itinerary with a short land tour. Agents selling our river cruise extensions benefit from everything being organised for them and the extensions are also fully commissionable."

The seven-night Blue Danube cruise starts and finishes in Budapest, with prices from £1,199pp with the option to add a three-night post cruise in a five-star hotel in Budapest with breakfast and two lunches from £399pp.

Insider Journeys is looking to add more cruise and stay tours to its portfolio following an increase in demand for the option to linger a bit longer in destinations, said marketing executive Ellena Johnston.

"In September 2015 we launched our first tour combining an eight-night river cruise with land-based touring before and afterwards. And more recently we have added the 16-day Mekong and Beyond tour, which has been incredibly popular with first-time cruisers."

Cruise and stay options are being increased and improved on each year, so agents looking to sell cruise to first-timers are likely to have a wider pool of options to pick from.

"In September 2015 we launched our first tour combining an eight-night river cruise with land-based touring before and afterwards. And more recently we have added the 16-day Mekong and Beyond tour, which has been incredibly popular with first-time cruisers."



1. Do your research on your clients and make sure you know if they prefer beach to land-based touring as this will help you match their needs to the right cruise.

2. Look out for companies that offer both land and sea options as you can provide your client with a good deal with some great combination offers. Also, you can be sure these operators will look after clients during the transition from land to cruise.

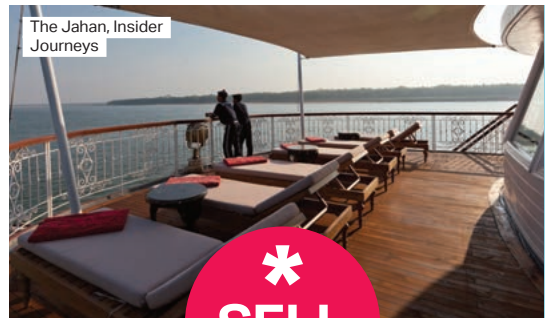
3. Always ask cruise companies if they offer add-ons for clients; they often do.

4. Establish your customer's budget so that you can suggest different cruise options and even include a city stay or tour.

5. Make sure you tell your clients that they will be able to save money if they pre-book their extensions.



Mekong



The Jahan, Insider Journeys



Cosmos Tours and Cruises offers the 20-day Spirit of the Canadian Rockies and Alaska Cruise which includes a tour of the Canadian Rockies and city stays in Vancouver and Victoria on Vancouver Island, a two-day Rocky Mountaineer rail journey and a seven-night Holland America Alaska cruise. Prices start at £4,799pp, including flights from Gatwick, accommodation, most meals, the services of a tour director and transfers.
cosmostoursandcruises.co.uk | 0800 668 1365

Fred Olsen has a 21-night Caribbean, Canal and Peru cruise that departs from Southampton on January 3 2017. Prices for the fly-cruise start at £3,149pp. The optional cruise and stay package is a five-night post-cruise stay in Cusco and Lima that costs from £2,299pp and includes five nights' accommodation, return flights between Cusco and Lima, train service to and from Machu Picchu, most meals and transfers.
fredolsencruises.com | 0845 314 3950

Insider Journeys offers a 16-day Mekong and Beyond cruise and stay package that combines an eight-night cruise on the boutique Jayavarman vessel with seven days' land-based touring. Prices lead in at £2,900pp and include 15 nights accommodation, two internal flights, transfers, most meals and the services of a guide.
insiderjourneys.co.uk | 01865 268 941

G Adventures' 15-day Cuba Libre and Sailing trip includes sailing around the coast of Cuba on a catamaran and overnights in local villas, homestays and hotels in Havana, Viñales, María La Gorda and San Diego. Prices start at £1,829pp and include accommodation, most meals, transfers and some tours.
gadventures.com | 0344 272 2060

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ASIAN ADVENTURES

BY JEANNINE WILLIAMSON

FOR AN EXOTIC RIVER CRUISE RECOMMEND THE MIGHTY
MEKONG AND INSPIRING IRRRAWADDY

Mekong





Avalon Myanmar

AmaDara,
AmaWaterways



As river cruising continues to boom, passengers are setting their sights further afield and river cruise lines are introducing new ships and itineraries to meet the growing demand for exotic destinations.

The Mekong and Irrawaddy have experienced the biggest growth in long-haul river cruising. Running through Cambodia and Vietnam, the Mekong provides clients with the opportunity to experience two fascinating countries and the contrasting cities of Siem Reap - gateway to the ancient Angkor Wat temples - and Ho Chi Minh City, the former Saigon. A decade ago Burma, now known as Myanmar, was a destination for the intrepid few, but political stability and a growing tourism infrastructure have opened up this beguiling country to western visitors.

Andy Harmer, CLIA Europe vice president operations, said: "The Mekong is southeast Asia's greatest river, while the Irrawaddy is fast becoming very popular now that it's easily accessible to visitors. A river cruise is the best way to get into the heart of the regions, exploring different cultures and meeting local people."

Pandaw founder Paul Strachan pioneered modern-day passenger cruising on the Irrawaddy in the 1990s, and recently launched the 18-passenger Kha Byoo Pandaw which cruises from Pagan to Katha on the Upper Irrawaddy.

Sales and marketing manager Sven Zika said: "The boom started after the country opened up in 2013. Since then much has changed, but the way of life along the Irrawaddy has thankfully remained largely unchanged. Pandaw passengers are able to observe many of the cultural highlights as well as stops at villages along the way, where time has stood still and a lack of roads means they are only accessible via the Irrawaddy."

Ultra-low drafts enable Pandaw vessels to reach remote areas, and in September the 24-passenger Yunnan Pandaw launches to sail on the Upper Mekong from Vientiane, in Laos, to China's Jinghong - a 14-night trip that can be added to the seven-night Ho Chi Minh City to Siem Reap cruise.

Mainstream lines debuting on both rivers include Scenic, which launched the 68-passenger Scenic Spirit in January and has its first standalone Southeast Asia brochure. With a staff-to-guest ratio of almost 1:1, the 64-passenger all-suite ship with facilities including a pool and open-air cinema offers five Mekong itineraries through Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and Laos. Sibling vessel Scenic Amber launches on the Irrawaddy in September.

"Our success in Europe has driven us to look for new, exciting voyages for our customers," said managing director Chris Townson. "Scenic endeavours to be in keeping with trends and the Irrawaddy and Mekong itineraries were a natural progression to achieve that goal."

Scenic's mid-market sister brand Emerald Waterways exclusively charters the Mekong Navigator and for 2016/17 offers a collection of itineraries ranging from 14 to 21 days, alongside a seven-night Ho Chi Minh City to My Tho cruise. Excursion options include cooking and lantern-making classes, attending an imperial banquet and taking part in a traditional Buddhist water blessing.

In 2015 Avalon Waterways launched two 36-passenger vessels - Avalon Siem Reap and Avalon Myanmar - which sail on the Mekong and Irrawaddy respectively. The line used to offer cruise-only prices for Asia, but is now packaging itineraries with flights to make it easier for agents to quote to their customers.

Last August AmaWaterways welcomed the new 124-passenger AmaDara to the fleet. Sailing on the Mekong, all 62 cabins have balconies and the ship includes a spa. The line is currently offering free flights and £500pp savings for 11-night itineraries departing in March 2017, subject to availability. Savings are also being offered on the all-suite Myanmar vessel AmaPura.

AmaWaterways operates in partnership with APT, and the Mekong vessel AmaLotus has undergone a refit. All cabins now have a balcony and there's a new private dining room and Vietnamese-inspired cafe.

Viking, the largest river cruise line, operates a 56-passenger vessel on the Mekong and Irrawaddy, and head of sales Neil Barclay said: "It's a great alternative for agents to suggest to clients who have already cruised around Europe, or for land-based clients looking for an adventurous holiday destination."

Mekong; Viking


Angkor Wat;
Emerald Waterways


1. A river cruise is less tiring than land-based travel and passengers only need to pack and unpack once.

2. Mekong and Irrawaddy itineraries provide authentic experiences, exploring many places untouched by commercialism and mass tourism.

3. Suggest Asia cruises to active, open-minded clients with a sense of adventure.

4. The best time for cruises on both rivers is during the cooler, dry season from November to March.

5. Ships are small and intimate and friendly staff provide a personal touch.



Burma



APT offers a 14-night Vietnam and Cambodia Highlights itinerary from Ho Chi Minh City to Siem Reap, from £3,995pp for an April 2017 departure, including home to airport transfer, flights, hotel accommodation and cruise with excursions and all meals and drinks onboard.
0800 046 3002 | aptouring.co.uk

Avalon Waterways' Golden Myanmar & the Irrawaddy land-cruise features a 10-night cruise and three nights in Yangon from £4,666pp, departing September 2016 and including home pick-up service, flights, all cruise meals and wine with dinner, excursions and onboard gratuities.
0800 668 1801 | avaloncruises.co.uk

Audley Travel offers a 19-night Highlights of Burma tour featuring a seven-night Pandaw cruise on the 16-passenger Katha Pandaw. Starting from £5,965pp, the price includes flights, hotel stays in Yangon and Bagan, and cruise with all meals and excursions.
01993 838 105 | audleytravel.com

Other operators featuring the Mekong and Irrawaddy include:

CroisiEurope | croisieurope.co.uk
Riviera Travel | rivieratravel.co.uk
Uniworld | uniworld.com

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THIS TIME OUR COLUMNISTS DISCUSS:

First time River Cruise?

French Rivers V Danube and Rhine

Portside with

SIMON MCDERMOTT

business development manager,
AmaWaterways UK



The Case for French Rivers

When it comes to choosing a river cruise for the first time the French rivers can often be overlooked, and yet they have far more to offer than initially meets the eye.

All of the rivers in France can be accessed by Eurostar and TGV, while most airlines offer a direct service out of most regional airports and low-cost carriers offer options into some of the smaller, more central airports such as Nîmes (Arles) for the Rhone, giving the traveller more choice.

The River Seine provides an ideal gateway into the French capital city of

Paris. Sailing out of Paris and through the region of Normandy with AmaWaterways, you will embark on a romantic cruise that will enable you to witness many picturesque sights, as well as the poignant D-Day landing beaches and the famous gardens of Giverny, which were captured beautifully by Monet.

A favourite river of mine is the Rhone, which flows from Lake Geneva, Switzerland, and southward before reaching the Provence region of France. The AmaWaterways Provence & Spain itinerary is just one of the many river cruise options that will enable you to visit Provence. Starting in Lyon, this itinerary

will take you to a list of towns and cities steeped in history and Roman architecture, and includes stops at Lyon, Vienne, Tournon and Viviers before reaching southern France.

Most operators will provide opportunities to visit famed vineyards and wine-growing areas such as Chateauneuf du Pape, Cotes du Rhone, Beaujolais and Bordeaux. AmaWaterways launched its 'Taste of Bordeaux' itinerary in March 2016, and it is proving extremely popular.

Most river cruise operators

"Most operators will provide opportunities to visit famed wine-growing areas"

On the Rhone itineraries, AmaWaterways offers excursions to a truffle farm, where guests can watch the farmer and his dogs dig for truffles and also sample this fine delicacy, as well as visiting an olive farm where some of the finest olive oil in the world is produced. Trips are also offered to local markets to sample some of the delicious local fruits, meats and cheeses.

So, if you have customers who have a passion for history, art food and wine (and who doesn't?) then offer them a French river cruise first. They will not be disappointed.



Starboard with

KATHRYN BEADLE

managing director,
Uniworld UK



The Case for the Rhine and Danube

Many river cruise operators, Uniworld included, offer week-long cruises along the Rhine and the Danube separately, but for clients that have two weeks to spare, it's a real treat to sail all the way through from Amsterdam to Budapest, or vice versa, taking in both rivers, which are joined by the Main-Danube canal.

There's plenty for culture vultures along the way, from the architecture of the Parliament

Building and the Buda Palace in Budapest to the galleries of Vienna and Amsterdam (think Klimt, Monet, Van

Gogh, Rembrandt), through the heartland of some of Europe's most prominent composers – Liszt, Strauss, Mozart.

It's not all history either, with a visit to see the robots in action at the BMW Factory, gentle riverside bike rides, pretzel making, wine tasting, an aerial cable car journey from Koblenz to the Ehrenbreitstein Fortress and a behind-the-scenes visit to Vienna's famous Spanish Riding School included en route.

The beauty of the scenery along these rivers shouldn't be underestimated. The Danube Bend, which cruisers sail through between Budapest and Vienna, is particularly

picturesque, while the atmospheric morning mist over Schlögener Schlinge, the goose neck bend between Linz and Passau, is well worth the early rise. These valleys are punctuated by numerous hilltop castles and churches such as Melk Abbey, and Esztergom, the largest Catholic church in Hungary.

The culinary delights available on these rivers might be a very pleasant surprise to many, ranging from Hungary's signature Eszterhazy cake and Vienna's famous schnitzel

and hot dogs, to hearty goulash and an abundance of fresh river trout. And what could be nicer than stopping in picturesque Regensburg for

kaffee and kuchen or a cold German beer?

Let's not forget that these rivers are also the very best way to experience Europe's quintessential Christmas markets. We also have dedicated multi-generational departures on our Castles Along the Rhine itinerary, so every member of the family can enjoy these cruises. Add to this the plethora of flights offering easy access from the UK to Amsterdam, Budapest or Basel, and it's no wonder that the Danube and the Rhine remain perennially popular.





THIS TIME OUR COLUMNISTS DISCUSS:

The importance of standing out from the crowd

It's all
CLIA**ANDY
HARMER**vice president operations,
CLIA EuropeIndependent
voice**CLAIRE
BRIGHTON**senior commercial manager,
Advantage Travel Partnership

I recently spoke
at The Global
Travel Group
Conference in

Dubai on the challenges some businesses face in finding their competitive advantage – that element of business that sets you apart from other travel agencies.

There are many examples in history where businesses have been able to find a competitive advantage and as a result grow their sales and become market leader. In the case of Coca-Cola it was the design of the bottle. For Starbucks it was permitting customers to have a coffee 'their way' at multiple locations across America (and later the world).

So my message to travel agencies and travel sellers is: what is it about your offering that allows you stand out from the crowd? Why should a cruise holiday customer choose you over the hundreds of other options available to them?

In the case of cruise and holiday sales, what better competitive advantage could there be than being the ultimate experts in our field? To be very knowledgeable on the many different styles of ship, the destination experiences, the ports of call and the itineraries?

This is a competitive advantage that puts training

at the heart of everything that we do. We need to keep up to date with the changes and innovations in our industry – to know about ships, itineraries, ports, entertainment, dining, excursions, kids clubs and all other aspects that go to making a cruise holiday such a great and memorable experience.

In the cruise sector we have a particular challenge – to switch land-based customers to a cruise. That requires us to be true experts and real

ambassadors so that we can give the best possible advice to those who will switch to a cruise for the first time.

Research consistently tells us that

training improves performance. This is one of the reasons why CLIA recently announced the Training Crusade, where we are asking individuals to agree to an additional 30 minutes' training per week to enhance their performance.

So make full use of the excellent training opportunities, attend CLIA events and ship visits, review the excursions available in the most popular ports and keep up to date with changes and innovations. Then use that knowledge and expertise to present cruise holiday options to your customers.



Echoing Andy's comments, in this day and age it is vital for every business to make itself stand out from the crowd. Why let your business be ordinary when it could be extraordinary?

The poet, Maya Angelou said: "If you are always trying to be normal, you will never know how amazing you can be" – and I think this is something that everyone can adopt in their business.

Andy is absolutely right when he talks about training: it really is vital that you are as knowledgeable as you can be about all elements of the cruise industry.

However, you need to go beyond this when it comes to actually taking that training into real life. In other words, once you have all this knowledge, how do you ensure your customers know how clued-up you are?

It's time to sell yourself – your skills and your knowledge – to your clients, and, while it might sound a bit cheesy, to take them on a journey with you. After all, it is your personality that makes your customers keep returning to you. People buy from people; it is key to reflect this in your marketing.

Cruise lines do this particularly well. Take Carnival

for example. The brand is lots of fun when you get on board so all its marketing activity – from TV adverts to social media – reflects this fun element. Of course Carnival has huge budgets, but it isn't the size of the budgets that is important; it's the ideas and how they are expressed that matters.

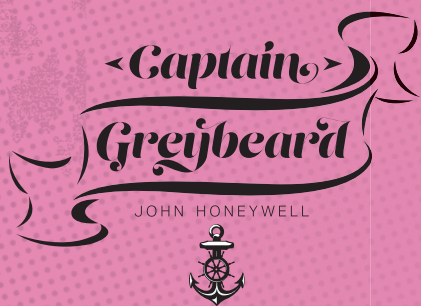
In any case there are many ways of marketing yourselves to your customer base for little or no cost. Social media is a perfect example. A personal

story of one of your team holidaying on a particular ship would get far more interaction from your customers than a simple offer for a holiday for example – and

a video or a vlog (video blog) is even more impactful. There are some great new ideas out there that could be used while away or even on a ship visit, allowing your audience to see what you are seeing – the 'periscope' app for example. This is "an app that lets you explore the world through the eyes of somebody else". This is just one option that allows you to engage better with your audience and – if you manage it well – that sets you apart from others.

Remember: think outside the box. Make yourself extraordinary!





Pootling along to the Big Apple

Gone are the days of crossing the Atlantic by Cunard liner and returning by Concorde. That was when the QE2 would take five days to steam from Southampton to New York and the supersonic jet would whisk passengers back to Heathrow in a mere three-and-a-half hours.

Now QE2 lies in Dubai with an uncertain future, and the remaining Concorde can be seen only in museums – one of them, as it happens, at the Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum in New York.

QE2's successor, Queen Mary 2, took eight days to cross, "pootling along" at a mere 18 knots according to Captain Chris Wells when I travelled on the ship's first post-Remastering crossing in early July.

Usually, the ship turns round and heads for home on the same day. Passengers planning back-to-back two-way crossings have only a few hours to hit the shops on Fifth Avenue, or to see a few sights.

Others might take a couple of days to visit the Empire State Building and the Statue of Liberty, and maybe take in a Broadway show, before flying back to the UK.

This time, a substantial number took advantage of the fact that the ship was taking a five-day Fourth of July cruise to Halifax and Boston before returning to New York and sailing home to England.

Some stayed on board throughout. For others, a leading UK cruise agent had been particularly successful in packaging hotel stays with the (almost) back-to-back crossings.

Passengers that chose the option found

themselves travelling with Micky Arison, chairman of Carnival Corporation, who bought Cunard in 1998.

Travelling with his British-born wife, Madeleine, he was making his first Transatlantic crossing since he arrived in the United States in 1954 as a five-year-old on board the Cunard liner *Mauretania*.

Were it not for Micky's vision – and investment – there would never have been a Queen Mary 2. He decided to make the money available to build the ship, which was completed in 2004. Memorably, he told lead designer Stephen Payne that he had better make sure the plans were right, because he would never get a second chance.

Arison's first task on arriving in Southampton was to chair a Carnival board meeting. He then travelled to Almere, in the Netherlands, where he officially opened the Arison Maritime Centre, which has been built to train crew throughout the Carnival Corporation, and named in honour of his father Ted, who founded the company.

"Micky Arison was making his first Transatlantic crossing since he arrived in the United States in 1954 as a five-year old on board the Cunard liner *Mauretania*"

On board Queen Mary 2



Frank di Rio is not a man to let the water stagnate between his toes. On board the ship he has branded "the most luxurious in the world" he pronounced that he is already making plans to send other vessels from Norwegian Cruise Lines Holdings to Cuba.

"It's literally a case of waiting for the phone to ring to give the final, final approval," he told a press briefing on the inaugural sailing of Regent Seven Seas Explorer.

First into Havana, before the end of this year, could be Oceania's Regatta, sister to Fathom's Adonia – already sailing there every other week for rivals Carnival Corporation. The larger Marina could follow in 2017 and eventually the island will feature in several itineraries.

Del Rio made an emotional return to Cuba last year – his family left in 1961, when he was seven years old. Opponents of the Castro regime, they escaped to Jamaica before emigrating to Connecticut, and later moving to Miami.

His future plans for Regent could involve ports on the opposite side of the world from Cuba. He dropped heavy hints that, after Explorer's as-yet-unnamed sister is launched in 2020, the Chinese market might have developed sufficiently to entertain one of his luxury vessels.

"The fuel for growth in cruise has always been the elderly," he said. "They have the time and they have the wealth. The question in China is, will the elderly take up cruising as couples, after they have been with their families?"

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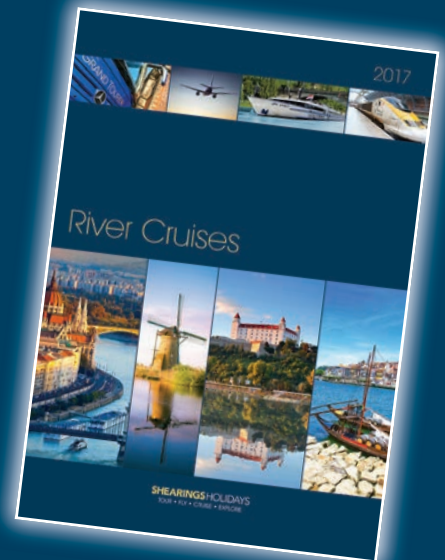
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