

cruise

TRADE NEWS

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small ship cruising

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6

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 **Carnival**

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JULY / AUGUST 2018



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TRADE NEWS

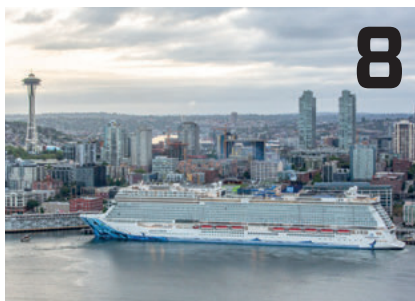
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2019 Viking river cruises save £750pp – prices from £1,345pp

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From £1,445pp

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8 days, 6 guided tours
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13 days, 10 guided tours
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11 days, 7 guided tours
Departing March to November 2019
From £2,095pp

Imperial Jewels of China

15 days, 11 guided tours
Departing March to November 2019
From £3,145pp

Lyon & Provence

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Departing March to November 2019
From £1,895pp

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11 days, 11 guided tours
Departing May to September 2019
From £3,145pp

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Prices correct at time of going to print but are subject to availability and change. From prices are per person and based on two people sharing the lowest grade stateroom available, departing on selected dates in 2019. Prices valid until 31 July 2018. Single supplements apply. Please note on selected cruises a visa may be required and is at the passengers own expense.

*Restrictions apply. For more information please visit vikingcruises.co.uk/terms-conditions or call us.



Letter

Welcome to the new issue...



From lectures with renowned authors to talks with natural history experts, enrichment has been embraced by the industry, and clients are also responding positively to the added value it offers them when on a cruise.

Nobody knows how to deliver an enriching itinerary better than **Voyages to Antiquity**. On page 18 we chat to **MD Jos Dewing** to discover how such programmes are driving the cruise line's business.

Escorted and specialist tours will always be of interest to clients looking for a more enriching and immersive cruise experience. Want to cash in? Our free supplement will help you get to know the sector and what's on offer.

Other highlights this issue include an insightful update on eco cruising on page 26, and our new '**day in the life**' agent profiles on page 24.

You can trust us to be first in line at all the key industry events – we've recently been on board some impressive vessels, flying to Seattle for the **Norwegian Bliss** christening ceremony, **Amsterdam** for the christening of **Crystal Debussy**, and **Palma** for the launch and maiden voyage of **Marella Explorer**.

We wouldn't be doing our job if we didn't report on each and every one of them, so we hope you enjoy this issue's ship reviews and galleries.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Rebecca'.

Rebecca Barnes
Editor
@RebeccaCTN

NEW SHIPS

Virgin's new take on design

Virgin Voyages has unveiled the first interior and exterior designs of its maiden cruise ship, launching in 2020.

The artwork, part of the Virgin Voyages Creative Collective and the modern romance of sailing concept, includes designs from a range of firms – among them Roman and Williams in New York and Concrete Amsterdam – none of which have designed for the cruise industry before now.

British designer Tom Dixon is the brains behind the ship's Mexican restaurant and Richard's Rooftop – a private lounge. "It seems risky to use designers who have never been on a cruise before, but it makes complete sense," said Dixon. "The obvious thing to do would be to go to experts in cruise design; I like that Virgin didn't do that."

This view was backed by Virgin boss Richard Branson, who added that the company "wanted to challenge the way a holiday at sea looked and felt... it carries on a long-held tradition we have at Virgin of going into new industries with a fresh pair of eyes."

Virgin Voyages has three ships on order, due for delivery in 2020, 2021 and 2022.



The Dock, designed by Roman and Williams

NEW SHIPS



Iona has been named after a Scottish island

P&O Cruises names ship

P&O Cruises has revealed that its new ship will be called Iona. Over 30,000 people entered a competition to name the new ship, which joins the fleet in May 2020.

The cruise line held the steel cutting ceremony on 25 April 2018, at the Meyer Werft shipyard in Papenburg, Germany.

P&O Cruises senior vice president Paul Ludlow said: "We couldn't think of a more fitting name than after an island that is one of the UK's most beautiful places – Iona. It is such a perfect name

for our ship. She will be the next stage of the future for P&O Cruises. Iona played a significant part in shaping the history of our nation and we hope that with this very special name our new ship will shape the future of holidays at sea for generations."

Cruises on Iona, named after a small island off the southwest coast of Mull in the Inner Hebrides, go on sale in September. Further details of the ship, its design and itineraries will be released over the coming months.

CHARITIES

The gift of sight

Mercy Ships, which operates the largest non-governmental hospital ship in the world, has completed its eye surgery programme. More than 1,500 surgeries were undertaken to remove cataracts. Mercy Ships also held a Celebration of Sight event to mark the occasion.

The eye programme is run in every country Mercy Ships visits. The hospital ship is currently focusing on sub-Saharan Africa. The next stop is Guinea, where it will stay for 10 months.

"Unlike the adult cases that celebrate restored vision, the pediatric celebration of sight marks a lifetime that will have been changed," said Dr Glenn Strauss, ophthalmic surgeon, Africa Mercy.



The sight programme has been successful

ITINERARIES

Carnival Journeys launches longer cruises for 2019

Carnival Cruise Line has announced that it will offer three special longer Carnival Journeys cruises in 2019.

The voyages include a 24-day trans-Pacific crossing aboard Carnival Splendor from Long Beach to Singapore, as well as two voyages aboard Carnival Miracle – a 13-day Panama Canal transit from Tampa to Long Beach, and a 14-day Hawaii cruise round trip from Long Beach.

The 24-day voyage is the longest single departure in Carnival Cruise Line's history and marks the first time that the line will visit Guam, Vietnam and Malaysia on a North American departure.

Guests sailing on Carnival Journeys cruises will also



enjoy a range of activities focusing on topics such as photography, cooking, arts and crafts, and celestial navigation, along with a 1980s-themed Throwback Sea Day.

"We're delighted to expand upon our itinerary choices

with these three exciting Carnival Journeys, including an unforgettable 24-day-voyage trans-Pacific transit featuring our first-ever calls to spectacular ports in the Far East," said Christine Duffy, president of Carnival Cruise Line.

NEW SHIPS

Norwegian Bliss christened in Seattle



Norwegian Cruise Line's new ship, Norwegian Bliss, has been officially christened in her summer home of Seattle.

The 168,000-gross-tonne ship, Norwegian's largest, cruised into the Port of Seattle and the recently renovated

and expanded Bell Street Cruise Terminal at Pier 66, a public-private investment between Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings and the Port of Seattle.

"As the largest ship to ever be christened in Seattle,

Norwegian Bliss' ceremony was our most exciting one yet," said Andy Stuart, president and chief executive officer of Norwegian Cruise Line. "We thank the Emerald City for a very warm welcome and their partnership, and we are looking forward to continuing and strengthening our relationship with the Port of Seattle for years to come."

Norwegian Bliss, which has a capacity of 4,004 guests, will cruise seven-day voyages to Alaska from Seattle and then, in October, the ship will sail from New York City to the Bahamas and Florida, and the Southern and Western Caribbean.

APPOINTMENTS



Viking has increased the size of its trade sales team with the appointments of **Gemma Bradwell** and **Sabrina Piscioneri**, who have joined to support trade sales in the North and South of England respectively.



Global Ports Holding PLC (GPH) has appointed **Serafin Blazquez** as port services director. Serafin will be based in Barcelona and will report to the chief commercial officer, Mark Robinson.



Norwegian Cruise Line has announced **Nicky Foot** as business development director, UK & Ireland. Nicky will report to Nick Wilkinson, vice president & MD, UK & Ireland and MEA. Nicky has over 30 years of sales and travel experience.



CLIA has strengthened its global comms team with two new appointments.

Ross Walker will take up the newly created role of director of global digital and social strategy, while **Louise Prior** is taking on the role of public relations director.

RIVER CRUISES

The Ganges awaits
intrepid travellers



Pandaw's Ganges sailing

Pandaw has launched an India river expedition that will take guests on a journey along the Lower Ganges, aboard the RV Orient Pandaw.

The seven-night sailing, from Kolkata to Farraka, and vice versa, will debut on 23 December 2018, with weekly departures until the end of April 2019. It will re-commence in July 2019 to April 2020.

"We're delighted to have our own ship positioned in India and are excited to be able to offer our customers the full Pandaw experience in a totally new destination," said Pandaw founder Paul Strachan. "There's no river in the world as sacred as The Ganges, and an expedition on the Lower Ganges, or Hooghly, is one of the most picturesque

journeys imaginable."

Built in Vietnam in 2012, the Orient Pandaw features 30 staterooms on two decks, all with personal veranda space, indoor dining, a deck bar, a movie and lecture theatre and a spa.

Prices start from \$1,890.00 per person, based on two people sharing a cabin.

NEW SHIPS

Saga's big giveaway

Saga Cruises has announced that all agents who attended the 2018 CLIA Conference will receive an invitation to the shakedown cruise on Spirit of Discovery in July 2019.

More than 400 agents will receive an invitation to join the ship before it embarks on its first customer cruise.

Iain Powell, head of trade sales at Saga, said: "This is an incredibly exciting time for Saga and we want to share it with our agent partners. Spirit of Discovery marks a real turning point for us, delivering small ship luxury cruising designed for the UK market."

Agents will get to
experience Spirit of
Discovery



PONANT backs sustainability

PONANT has reinforced its support for sustainable practices designed to reduce environmental impact on the world's oceans.

The French cruise line donated 1 per cent of turnover made on 8 June to Sea Plastics, a non-profit organisation created in 2016 that aims to further the development of a circular economy and monitor the impact of plastics on marine environments.

"We protect best what we know: that statement encapsulates the spirit that drives PONANT to offer sustainable

tourism, focused on values of respect for the ecosystems and the populations encountered, and on preservation of the environment, in particular the oceans and polar regions," said Jean Emmanuel Sauvé, PONANT's CEO.

PONANT is also building a hybrid electric polar exploration ship powered by liquefied natural gas, which is due to launch in 2021, to lower its emissions footprint. In addition, before signing off on a new itinerary, the company carries out fact-finding missions and environmental impact assessments.



PONANT is backing the Sea Plastics organisation

NEW SHIPS

MSC Seaview christened

MSC Seaview has been christened in the port of Genoa.

The traditional smashing of the bottle of champagne was performed by the ship's godmother, actress Sophia Loren.

MSC Seaview is the 15th addition to the fleet and the third ship to come into service within 12 months as part of the company's €10.5 billion investment plan.

The 5,179-passenger ship started her maiden voyage from Genoa on 10 June, travelling to six embarkation ports in the Western Mediterranean, including Marseille and Barcelona, as well as other Mediterranean destinations such as Naples; Messina, Sicily; and Valetta, Malta.

MSC Seaview has been designed to bring guests to the open decks and



Seaview celebrates its christening

walkways. Featuring the highest ratio of outdoor spaces of any MSC Cruises ship, every element enables guests to enjoy the outdoors in every aspect of their life on board, from cabins and suites with outdoor spaces such as terraces and balconies, and eating and drinking.

IN BRIEF

Orion named by astronaut

Viking's fifth ocean ship has been named by NASA astronaut Dr. Anna Fisher during a ceremony in Italy. The 930-guest Orion takes its name from the constellation, and also honours Dr. Fisher's work on the Orion exploration vehicle project. The ship includes the Explorers' Dome, a planetarium-like theatre where guests can watch films about exploration, and the Explorations in Space Collection, which pays tribute to travel beyond earth. In addition, Orion will be the first ship in the fleet to host a resident astronomer, Howard Parkin, a Royal Astronomical Society Fellow, who will give lectures and stargazing sessions on board.

Register for CLIA conference

Registration is now open for this year's CLIA River Cruise Conference, to be held in Paris. Held on 10 and 11 November, the conference will include ship visits, a trade fair and networking opportunities. Travel agent delegates will also dine and stay overnight on 10 November on board one of the river ships in port.

Crown Princess renovated

Princess Cruises has completed its renovation of the 3,080-guest vessel, Crown Princess. The ship includes new dining venues, luxury beds and an upgraded spa. Crown Princess will cruise the Caribbean later this year, while she will be based in Southampton in spring and summer 2019 for a series of round-Britain cruises. The refit was completed in Freeport, Bahamas, at the Grand Bahama shipyard.

MSC signs for new ship

MSC Cruises and STX France have signed an order for the construction of a fifth Meraviglia class cruise ship, to be delivered in 2023. The vessel will be equipped with a new generation of dual-fuel engines designed to run on liquefied natural gas (LNG). The news was delivered at a ceremony at the Saint-Nazaire shipyard, where STX France and MSC Cruises celebrated three milestones: the steel cutting of the 4th Meraviglia class vessel, to be named MSC Virtuosa; the coin ceremony of MSC Grandiosa; and the float-out of MSC Bellissima.

NEW ITINERARIES



In-depth with Holland America Line

Holland America Line's new EXC In-Depth Voyages will take to the seas for the first time in September.

The programme, which builds on the company's Explorations Central theme, has been designed to offer guests a more immersive experience, and is being offered on the 1,258-guest Maasdam. The voyages range from 12 to 239 days and prices start at \$1,599 per person, double occupancy, for a 12-day sailing.

The first trip departs Fort Lauderdale on 10 September and sets sail for Papeete, Tahiti, via the

Panama Canal. Highlights include stops on the west coast of South America and visits to several South Pacific islands during the 34-day voyage.

The ship will journey along the southern coast of Australia, featuring a 16-day holiday cruise departing 21 December. In January, Maasdam will cruise the northwest coast of Australia to Singapore, where it embarks on a 20-day adventure in the Indian Ocean region. The final cruise is a Polynesian Crossing, ending at San Francisco, 7 May 2019.

INDUSTRY NEWS

Royal Caribbean takes stake in Silversea



Royal Caribbean has announced it will acquire a 66.7 per cent equity stake in luxury and expedition specialist Silversea Cruises.

The purchase price of the equity – based on an enterprise value of \$2 billion – is approximately \$1 billion, and will be financed through debt.

"Silversea is a crown jewel, and the acknowledged leader in luxury and expedition cruising, two key markets that are poised for growth," said Richard D. Fain, chairman and CEO of Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. "Uniting our two companies presents an extraordinary opportunity to expand vacation options for guests and create revenue in strategic growth areas."

Fain added that Manfredi Lefebvre d'Ovidio, chairman of Silversea, would remain in his post, "continuing to lead its strategy long term".

Lefebvre said: "This partnership will bolster the growth of this exceptional brand founded by my father. I have always been kindred spirits with Richard and we share a vision of offering excellence and leadership to our guests."

INDUSTRY NEWS

Cruisingexcursions.com introduces online tool for agents

Cruisingexcursions.com, which features approximately 12,000 excursions at more than 700 ports worldwide, has launched an online tool that allows travel agents to create shore excursion e-brochures for customers.

The tool generates a PDF brochure that is personalised with customer and agent name and contact details. It can also be emailed to customers. All excursions are commissionable to agents.

Included are a range of excursions with prices for each port of call for the chosen itinerary. The excursions are from the Essential Collection range, which gives guests access to key sites at a port of call, as well as private and tailored experiences. Agents can also offer 'Port Packages' deals, which are value bundles of three or more.

To create a brochure, an agent needs to access the cruisingexcursions.com website and enter the customer's cruise line, ship, date of departure and duration of trip.

NEW SHIPS

MSC announces further details for Bellissima christening ceremony

It will be the biggest event to grace the port of Southampton in recent memory, and with the christening of MSC Seaview in the rear-view mirror, full attention has now turned to the christening ceremony for the 5,700-passenger MSC Bellissima in March 2019.

Antonio Paradiso, managing director of UK & Ireland at MSC Cruises, was on hand at the christening of MSC Seaview to share some first details about his plans for Bellissima.

Despite MSC christenings traditionally having an Italian theme, Bellissima will be a celebration of the best of British.

"We tend to customise our celebrations according to the hosting country, and so with Seaview being in Italy it is more of an Italian ceremony, but with Bellissima it is the other way," explained Paradiso.

"I am already working on the artists

and the celebrities who will be performing at the christening, so watch this space as we'll be making more announcements in the next couple of months."

The big question though is whether Sophia Loren, the 83-year-old Italian actress who has christened 13 of MSC's ships, will be in attendance.

"Being Italian we are superstitious and so we tend to wait before making any announcements.

"But it goes without saying that Sophia Loren has launched all of our ships and I don't see why we should change this successful tradition. It is always an honour to have her on board."

Paradiso also recommitted himself to having "at least" 3,000 travel agents on board Bellissima during the three-day event – of which two days will be dedicated to people from the trade.



Antonio Paradiso

INTERVIEW

Walter Littlejohn

Vice president & MD,
Crystal River Cruises

Agents are a huge part of what we do – they deliver 96 per cent of our business. Consumers, by and large, don't know Crystal is in the river cruising space – we rely on our travel partners to convert people. They also share the fact that there is a true luxury choice in river cruising. A lot of our initial research came from guests who were telling us they had a proclivity to try river cruising but weren't familiar with any of the brands.

When we came to the marketplace, it was important to us to be consistent with the river ship experience, in line with the ocean liners. We took all their best elements and found ways to squeeze them onto a river ship. The easy option



would have been to take the typical river ship model and add Crystal touches. That would have probably cost a lot less money too. But it's key for us to offer the brand experience. The end result is about 30 points of differentiation between us and what the industry, in general, does.

Our crew-to-guest ratio is twice that of the average. The Crystal Mozart carries 154 guests with 92 crew members,

so we can deliver six-star service. We don't outsource any of our operations; everything is run in house. We are one of only three cruise lines to do that. Our on-board experience is at a different level, as we've been perfecting this model for 28 years.

We thought it would be a challenge to bring the ocean experience to the river, but we knew what we had to do. After all, scaling down is easier than scaling up. We also have the good fortune of being the only luxury cruise line that is run on a large ship platform. The guest experience is made up of thousands of touch points. At each one, you have to deliver beyond what is expected. We've learnt what those touch points are, so we can minimise failures and maximise successes.

Over the coming years we have a commitment to bring in one expedition ship, which arrives in 2020. We also have a commitment for at least one ocean liner, if not more, starting in 2022. Beyond that, we're not ready to say what we're going to do. When we do, it will be when we're fully baked and ready.

WORDS: GARY PETERS, JOSH STEPHENSON

#GenerationCruise

All the news, views and goings-on from the CLIA Conference 2018

GLOBALLY...

27 million
people will cruise
this year

1.5 billion
will take a holiday

36%
of cruisers are first timers



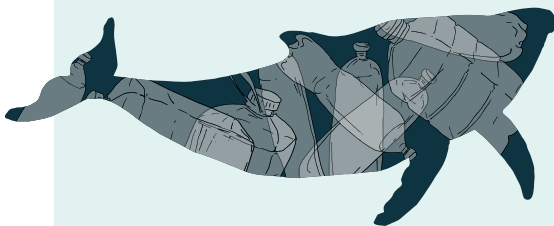
"We don't have a problem with oversupply, we can't build ships big enough."

Paul Ludlow, P&O Cruises

GREEN TEAM

"We are investing in new propulsion technology and LNG to lower sulphur emissions – we aim to have a much greener operation."

Gianni Onorato, chief executive, MSC Cruises



"Because we are at sea we need to do the job better and be more mindful. Cruise lines recycle 60 per cent more than the average person on land. We need to address the world's most important challenges."

Cindy D'Aoust, president and CEO, CLIA

/// The luxury sector will increase by 18 per cent by 2021; the segment has experienced unprecedented growth. Clients are seeking curated, bespoke and authentic experiences – we've learnt that iconic hotels become the destination – we want our ships to become a destination as well. **///**

Chris Austin, senior vice president, global sales and marketing, Seabourn



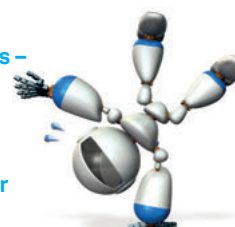
We had a great time networking at the Silversea agent ambassador's dinner held at The Pig Hotel in Brockenhurst. Ten agents were invited to network, dine and meet the Silversea team while discussing all things luxury. "We recognise the importance of the trade and to show our commitment to the agents, we wanted to create ambassadors so we can share product and get feedback in an informal way," said Silversea's head of sales, Connie Georgiou. "A few of the agents hadn't been to the CLIA conference before and we had a nice mix of those that have sold cruising for years and those that have never sold cruising but want to specialise, so for them it's a really good opportunity."

"Luxury is very important to my business as my client's expectations are very high – if they are paying for high end travel, I need to ensure that all aspects of their travel experience are met. This is what Silversea offers from the beginning to the end. They also offer great trade support to agents – the sales team are very knowledgeable and their willingness to help is second to none. They will assist in all aspects of training and support."

Jane Newson, Qube Travel

THE FUTURE...

- Digital personal assistants – for example, MSC's 'Zoe'
- Smart cabins
- Robotic entertainment
- Expedition is the new river
- Hologram performance



QUOTES

"Younger customers want to spend more on unique experiences. Sharing is their local currency."
Cindy D'Aoust, president and CEO, CLIA

"If a customer misses one holiday a year they have lost a big moment of their life; if we don't give them this we are not doing our job."
Gianni Onorato, chief executive, MSC Cruises

"Millennials are setting the trends and they want everything we offer – cruising fits in with their lifestyle."
Lisa Lutoff-Perlo, president and CEO, Celebrity Cruises

"We don't regard other cruise lines as competition, we are thrilled when they bring out new ships as they attract more people to cruising."
Harry Sommer, international business development, Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings

"Agents should talk to and listen to customers – discern where to place your clients as you want them to come back."
Rai Caluori, executive VP, guest experiences, Princess Cruises

Your Business

18 PAGES
OF INTERVIEWS,
SALES INCENTIVES
AND CAREER
INSPIRATION



Christening of the
Norwegian Bliss



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What's in it for you?

Tour with Voyages to Antiquity

Voyages to Antiquity is giving UK agents the chance to join the culture club this summer by laying on four educational ship visits.

The cruise line is providing tours of its vessel Aegean Odyssey in August, when the ship touches back home during its current European season. Visits will take place in Tilbury on 5 August and Hull on 3 August.

Up to 25 spots on each tour are up for grabs and are available on a first-come first-served basis.

Ship visits will feature a full tour, the opportunity to talk to crew, a short presentation, refreshments and the latest news about its plans for the trade.

To register, agents should use the link <https://voyagestoantiquity.typeform.com/to/iErC9O>



INCENTIVE

Cheers Riviera!

To coincide with the 2018 FIFA World Cup, Riviera Travel is offering a case of world beers for agents that score the perfect 'Riviera Travel hat-trick'.

To win, agents need to confirm a booking for each of their products during the World Cup: a European or Worldwide escorted tour; a European river cruise; and a tour or river cruise from the dedicated 'solo travellers' range.

Once agents have completed their hat-trick, they must email the three booking references to agencysales@rivieratravel.co.uk, along with their full name, ABTA number and store address.

The offer runs until 15 July, so agents should enter as soon as possible.

YOUR AGENCY SALES TEAM



Training with Fred.\ River Cruises

OFFER

Fred.\ River Cruises, the UK GSA for Amadeus River Cruises and preferred sales agent for Far Horizons of India and the Volga Dream, is launching a series of dedicated training sessions for travel agents in the UK.

The sessions – some of which will be hosted by Emma Moody, sales executive, Fred.\ River Cruises – start in July 2018, and will include an update and training session on each of the brands which, between them, provide river cruising experiences throughout Europe, Russia and India.

The first three sessions will be held in Northampton, 19 July, 8.30-10am; and Poole, Dorset, 26



July, 8.30-10am. More details will be released via the Amadeus River Cruises UK Trade social media accounts.

Agents will also be entered into a prize draw to win a cabin aboard an Amadeus River Cruises vessel.

Cunard reveals Southampton dates

Cunard has released a range of dates for agent ship visits taking place from August to December 2018. There are 10 in total, on board the Queen Victoria, Queen Mary 2, and Queen Elizabeth, with a focus on Cunard's Grills, Transatlantic and Alaskan offerings. Those interested should register now.

OFFER



OFFER

Keeping it clean

CLIA UK & Ireland is joining the Maritime Conservation Society's Great British Beach Clean in September.

Places are available on 14 September at 9.30am in West Wittering, West Sussex, and on 17 September at 10.15am in Formby Freshfield, Lancashire.

Andy Harmer, CLIA UK and Ireland director, said: "Working to maintain clean oceans and beaches is crucial. No single industry relies more on the splendour of our planet's oceans and seas, nor the pristine beauty of the world's harbours and seaside communities, than the cruise industry."

The Great British Beach Clean is the biggest of its type in the UK and provides insight into the litter problems in our seas and oceans. Almost 7,000 people took part in the Great British Beach Clean in September 2017 and removed 255,209 pieces of litter from 339 beaches. To take part, CLIA members can register via cruiseexperts.org

Shooting for success

INCENTIVE



Volga Dream, a Russian river cruise operator, has launched its 2019 programme, which features early booking discounts of five per cent on all sailings booked before 31st August 2018, and a 2018 World Cup incentive.

All agents making a Volga Dream 2019 booking during the World Cup via UK preferred sales agents Fred.\ River Cruises will receive double reward points on their loyalty scheme.

A highlight of the 2019 Volga Dream season is the exclusive new Imperial Programme and a new sailing from Moscow to Volgograd, taking in six UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

The Imperial Programme includes six nights hotel accommodation in Moscow and St Petersburg at the Four Seasons hotel, as well as six nights aboard the MS Volga Dream. Sightseeing tours for a maximum of 10 people per group are also included, along with private transfers.

Cruising clever

Jos Dewing, managing director of Voyages to Antiquity (VTA), discusses why he believes the privately owned cruise line occupies a unique space in the market – one which is most definitely on the up

We remain a unique cruising experience – we operate just one 350-passenger ship, which gets all our focus. We have an inclusive and multi-award-winning enrichment programme, which is a luxury for the mind, and our award-winning land programme is also inclusive. We are 100 per cent privately owned and that's quite a big deal as we have no shareholders to keep happy. Our ethos is very much on customer satisfaction. Our guests feel a sense of the 'golden age of travel' when they step aboard the ship, which has almost been completely rebuilt. Most people will agree she is a one-off and that's what makes us different.

It's fair to say that immersive experiences sell cruises.

The industry is diverse, and it is possible to become fully immersed in the experience of a single ship – some ships are all about the resort-style facilities, meaning many passengers are happy to stay on board. However, we are all about the destination. We aim to deliver true destination cruising and to do that, passengers must feel immersed in their surroundings. This requires very detailed planning, practical destination experience, and of course delivery. Our owner, Gerry Herrod, was one of the founding fathers of destination cruising in the 1980s, pioneering new ports and cruise experiences.



We may spend up to five days on land programmes before our cruises even start, and we bring on board experts to lecture on the places we visit. Our guides are usually locals, while we also hire destination experts to support our land programmes team, and our shore excursion staff are hired through our own university graduation programme. Getting under the skin of the cultures and traditions of the places we visit is what it is all about; it's not a simple marketing soundbite. With VTA, the star is very much the destination, including the culture and history, but our classical ship has become the perfect way to take our passengers there.

Our success lies in our authenticity, and the passion of our owner can be felt throughout the company. VTA

as a cruise concept was inspired by the book *The Middle Sea* by John Julius Norwich. This is a book that tackles time, geography and culture; it perfectly represents what we seek to pass on to our passengers. This approach is unique in its founding principles and delivery, and its success comes because there is a desire for this form of experiential travel, which will continue to grow. We also offer and include shore excursions, air travel, transfers, gratuities, hotel stays, and so on. Guests can leave their wallet in the safe for the whole cruise if they want. And people do increasingly want that.

Enrichment includes visual, educational and sensory experiences that will live with you forever, both as memories and as photos. It is a huge claim to say you have enriched lives, so we should never be flippant with its use as a marketing term. Our enrichment approach begins at least three months before a cruise starts. We send out a detailed guide that contains reading lists, lecture topics, and full shore excursion descriptions. We have some of the best academics and experts in the business as close friends, and they also mingle with passengers and join tours. We use local guides for port talks and tours and local performers to entertain on board in traditional style. Our Quietvox technology means

passengers never miss a word from our experts. Add to this the shore excursion graduates and our itineraries, and you have a powerful enrichment programme.

We are very proud to have won some prestigious enrichment awards, most recently 'Best for Enrichment' at the 2018 WAVE Awards, so we would like to believe we are getting things right on that front. With 98 per cent (will cruise again) passenger satisfaction scores, we feel we are being true to the word.

When I joined the company I was keen to work with specialist agents – this represented quite a challenge as we had a low profile in the industry. Since then, the focus has been on training and opportunities to experience the product. We are about to expand our

partnerships team and now have a dedicated trade Twitter account (@vtasales). We are also expanding our programme of FAM trips and agent ship visits in 2018. Rather than opt for a white label online training platform, we decided to build our own in-house. This was based on the concept of paid video, learning from celebrity chefs cooking and the like, and we turned the idea into a video training platform for agents: vtaexpert.com. This was highly recommended in the WAVE Awards and we continue to improve it. An agent can dip in and out, and when they have completed the whole course they become a 'Luminary' agent, are sent a personalised completion certificate, and gain access to more rewards and benefits. We also offer very competitive commissions and support for agents who go that extra mile to work with us.

I believe we represent one of the next strong areas of growth. In 2013, when I was MD of experiential cruise specialist The Cruise Line, I predicted that luxury expedition would be the next really big thing. VTA represents a style of cruising that is on the up, too. Informal and inclusive, with ships large enough to lose yourself on, but small enough to feel like home, where all the crew know your name. I believe these ships are anything between 250-700 passengers – queuing for anything is a thing of the past. Crew continuity is key and strong friendships are born. The guest's holiday is primarily inclusive: what is paid for the cruise upfront is not going to drift upwards on board – unless they want it to – and they come back from the experience with truly valuable memories and experiences to share. I expect a lot more will develop in this area. ⚓



Enriching shore excursions as standard



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On-board lecturers are also friends

Aegean Odyssey

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Sailing with just 350 like-minded passengers and only last year being voted 'Best for Small Ship Cruising' at the British Travel Awards, VTA's elegant small ship continues to deliver an unparalleled cruise ship experience to the world's most culturally discerning and naturally inquisitive travellers.

Each of our programmes has been carefully designed to offer inclusive pre and post-cruise stays in 4 & 5-star hotels, alongside highly-focused award-winning shore excursions and exciting mid-cruise land tours. With an average 98% of customers this season saying they would travel with us again, our formula continues to exceed expectations, moving from strength to strength. So why not contact us today to find out more about our excellent commission opportunities?



OF HER OWN



Voyages to Antiquity – officially the best in small-ship cruising!

Here at Voyages to Antiquity, we do what we do out of a love for travel, culture and history, not for awards – but it is still lovely when we win! So we were delighted to be named **Best Small Ships Cruise Line** at the 100% public-voted British Travel Awards, the so-called 'Oscars of the travel industry'. This wonderfully welcome endorsement of *Aegean Odyssey* and the rewarding nature of our cruises comes hot on the heels of a host of other accolades in 2017, including **Best for Shore Excursions** at the Cruise Critic 'Cruisers' Choice' Awards, and **Best for Enrichment** at the cruise-dedicated Wave Awards.



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vtaexpert.com will also keep you informed of the latest news, special offers and ship visit opportunities, plus you can enter our regular competitions to win exceptional travel and other prizes.

To order brochures or discuss promotional opportunities, please email Michelle Daniels, Head of Commercial (Global) at m.daniels@voyagestoantiquity.com

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How to handle complaints

Learn to manage complaints and secure the best outcome with our useful tips

We are in a job that sells something consumers want, so service should be at the forefront of everything we do.

It's not about enjoying the process of handling complaints. Things do happen and we should all have our own tools and methods of processing them. But don't shy away from the problem; one of my main tips is to deal with it quickly and effectively through clear communication, confidence and empathy.

Here's a refresher:

- Don't forget your internal policies and procedures as well as the regulations that you should adhere to, such as ABTA/ATO. Keep within your guidelines but always remember there is someone else involved who is not as informed about the rules as you are.
- No one wants to simply hear policy, so it's important to use your language well. Communication is key; it has to be a two-way conversation. Listen and be considerate of the other person's view and perspective, as well as being aware of your organisation's values and stance on the situation.

Be concerned and show it

Empathise. See the issue through the client's eyes. Don't argue – and don't interrupt. Use body language and facial expression to help convey your understanding, and be aware of your tone of voice. Remember, it's not just what you say, but how you say it. Avoid negative statements, such as "I'm afraid that's our policy". These can make a situation worse.

Establish the facts

Question tactfully and listen. Make notes if necessary. Observe the other person's tone of voice/ body language. Don't jump to conclusions. Ask questions to ensure you know what the customer really means and what the complaint is really about.

Summarise to check your understanding and listen without interrupting. Deal with the individual and the uniqueness of their situation.

Test for agreement

Talk through the issue, show that you understand, and find a solution. Is your solution acceptable? Ensure it is explained in a way that the customer understands, and that you listen to any further concerns. However, if there is no alternative, stand by your solution with conviction and explain what will happen next, but leave them in no doubt that you have understood and they are your focus. If there are alternatives, be prepared to negotiate assertively and with a mutual win-win end.

Action and move forward

Do what you say you will do and own the issue. Your name is important, so ensure the customer knows you are involved and to what level. Involve appropriate people, and, if necessary, ensure the customer knows what you are doing, who is involved and why you are doing what you have to do. It's important to keep everyone informed and stick to timelines. If you have to get back to someone, do it. Most of the time people will respond better if they feel you are giving them respect, and that you are listening and questioning to get to a mutually beneficial solution.

Have you had to make a complaint with a service provider? What did they do well and not so well? Learn from every interaction. Remind yourself of the basics of dealing with difficult situations.

Stay positive. Focus on the fact that you can do something (even if it's not quite what the customer wants) and that you can both move forward to the best of your ability.



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



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Day in the Life

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



Lindsay Forder

Cruise Direction, Letchworth

My alarm goes off at...

4am. I then head to the gym for a sweat session before getting to work.



My job entails...

I am mainly responsible for building and sourcing tailor-made packages, preparing them for market by writing copy, loading them to the website and communicating with our partners. I also help with proofing advertising pieces, both digital and press, and maintaining package pricing to include current sales campaigns. I also prepare and deliver training briefs to the sales team on new packages. Occasionally, as I come from a sales background, I also help with sales during busy peak periods or for more complex itineraries.

I got my job...

18 months ago, just as the company had started up. I made the move from retail tour operator sales to product and I really enjoy it.

A typical day involves...

Arriving at work around 8.30am, and making lots of tea – not always for myself. Working through the daily to-do list until lunchtime, which is usually around 1pm. The afternoon will then be spent addressing the rest of the to-do list, which seems to grow exponentially rather than reduce, before finishing around 6pm.



At lunchtime...

I usually eat at my desk. I always bring my own home-made lunch, which sometimes causes food envy in the office.



The most stressful part is...

Advertising print deadlines! No matter how prepared I am beforehand, deadline day always feels stressful.



I love it when...

A package sells really well or fills completely. I also love it when the customer care team receives great feedback from clients who have taken one of the packages I have built for them.

I'll never forget...

The constant stream of blonde comments and questions I have when I'm in the office – I don't think the team will ever let me forget them either!



Lucy See

See Cruises and Tours, Miami

My alarm goes off at...

I have an internal alarm that wakes me about 7.30am because I usually go to bed about 1am. If I don't have an urgent matter on my to-do list, or if I don't plan to go to an evening Zumba class, I head to the gym.



A typical day involves...

Having checked my emails at the gym, I attack the most challenging items first. Because I specialise in group cruises, that might be a phone call advising of a price increase of a cruise, or starting research on a destination quote of which I'm clueless. Often I find that research time is more effective if I seek out my subject-expert fellow agents for their recommendations, which usually means going with a particular tour operator. Working from home gives me flexibility to go to a training or vendor presentation in the middle of the day, and working with large groups has given me the confidence to undertake a full river cruise charter in Portugal in 2019.

I got my job...

My career started at Eastern Airlines, which helped develop my sales techniques and customer service skills. Looking at everything with a 'half full'



rather than 'half empty' attitude helped me survive Eastern's demise and I went on to spend 20 years teaching in high school. Continuing to travel gave me the platform to start selling to groups and the impetus to prepare for another phase of my life as a full-time travel agent. This began with a travel agency host company which has provided me with the tools and support that continue to help guide me in my vision – that of making memories.



At lunchtime...

While waiting for responses from tour operators or clients, I fit in the necessities of life. This might entail going to the bank or grocery store. I will always make time to fix lunch for my husband who also has a home office. Fortunately, neither of us has a set time, but lunch has to be incorporated into the afternoon.

The most stressful part is...

I don't really feel stressed, just a little anxious when people quote a price they found on the internet. I know in my head that I cannot compete with some of those prices, but it bothers me a little that I haven't convinced them of the value of using a travel agent.

I love it when...

I see my groups enjoying themselves and their pictures on Facebook. I love traveling with my family and introducing my two young grandkids to a new destination and a different culture or way of life. And it is so gratifying when I am able to match clients with a holiday they didn't think they could afford.



Saving the blue planet

How cruise lines are going green to sail towards a better future

The maritime industry has not always had a good name when it comes to environmental stewardship. While planes criss-crossing the globe emit 650 million tonnes of CO₂ per year, maritime transport emits around 1,000 million tonnes, according to an International Maritime 2014 report. Most of these greenhouse gases are caused by bigger and faster cargo ships and tankers traversing international trade routes.

However, things are changing, and it is cruise lines that are leading the way, showing the rest of the shipping industry the possibilities that technology allows, while flying the flag for sustainable ocean travel.

And these new eco-friendly developments couldn't come at a better time. Awareness of marine pollution is at an all-time high, thanks largely to the BBC documentary series, *Blue Planet 2*, which illustrated the strain man-made pollutants and actions are placing on delicate marine eco-systems.

Leading the charge

One of the fundamental eco-problems of ocean-bound transport has been the fuel vessels use; commonly, heavy fuel oil (HFO) or marine fuel. It is the most polluting of marine fuels and has a tendency to solidify and form tar lumps

when spilled, making it more persistent and harder to clean.

Driven by their own responsibility and demand from green-minded customers, several cruise operators are taking the initiative to drive change and are investing in alternatives. One is liquefied natural gas (LNG) – and several global cruise lines are leading the way in LNG investment. AIDAprima became the first cruise ship to routinely use LNG. Her sister LNG ship, AIDAnova, is due to set sail later this year.

Carnival Group, which owns AIDA and the P&O lines, has also ordered several other new LNG vessels. Viking also has a ship on order. Meanwhile, Royal Caribbean Cruises will be introducing its first LNG fleet in 2022 and is investing in fuel cell technology, which converts chemicals into electricity.

An even greener alternative to LNG is electrical power, and developments in battery cells now mean that the age of electric-powered ships is almost here. Hurtigruten has ordered a pair of hybrid-powered cruise ships that will use a Rolls Royce-engineered battery system to reduce carbon emissions by around 20 per cent. The first ship, to be delivered later this year, will have an auxiliary battery-powered motor allowing for sailing of up to 30 minutes on battery-powered propulsion. The second ship is





Cruise lines are cutting the amount of plastics used daily



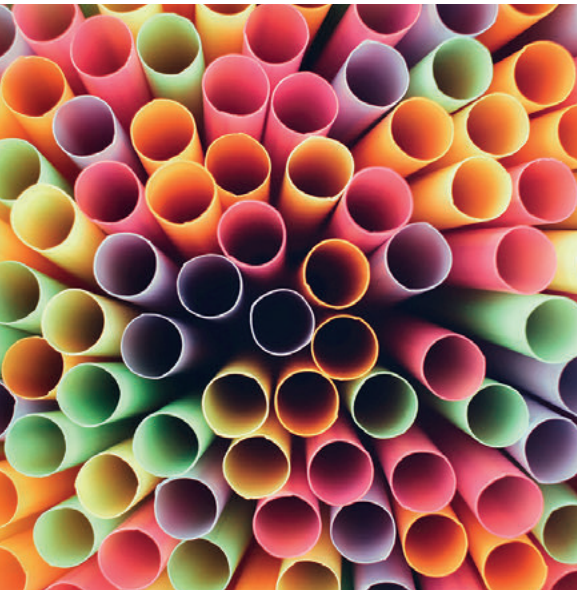
scheduled for delivery in 2019 and will be built with a fully fledged hybrid engine that can power the entire ship for longer periods and distances.

Hurtigruten hopes that its investment in the 20,000-tonne, 600-passenger ships will send a message of intent to the industry that greener vehicles are feasible.

"The future of shipping is, without a doubt, silent and emission-free," says CEO Daniel Skjeldam. "We will use our new expeditionary ships as ground-breakers for this new technology and show the world that hybrid propulsion on large ships is possible."

The eco gold standard is arguably renewable energy, and Viking Line is at the forefront of developments here. The company is due to take delivery of a Chinese-built €190 million LNG passenger vessel in 2020 and recently announced that the 63,000-tonne, 2,800-passenger ship will also be fitted with a revolutionary rotor sail that will utilise wind power. The system is 24 metres high and has been developed in a partnership with energy company Norsepower. It will make the ship the first-ever LNG/wind electric propulsion hybrid vessel. >

Plastic pollution is a pressing ecological problem



The plastics issue

Fuel is just one environmental factor – albeit a big one – and as cruise lines strive to be greener, they are being helped by new technology. Wastewater for example, can now be treated by a self-fuelling appliance that converts organic combustible waste, including food, paper and plastic, into useful energy. Another system uses electrochemistry to treat all forms of wastewater.

Beyond the mechanical systems of the ships, many companies are also looking at the impact of their operations. Plastic pollution is one of the most pressing eco problems of the age. Responding to growing public awareness of the problem, both Royal Caribbean and Hurtigruten have vowed to address the issue.

Royal Caribbean, for example, has joined forces with sister brands Celebrity Cruises and Azamara Club Cruises to investigate how to reduce the amount of plastics used in the daily operations of their combined 38 ships and ultimately eliminate all single-use plastic.

"We have a newly-formed plastics team within the corporation," explained Royal Caribbean's president and CEO, Michael Bayley. "We manage our waste very well, but we have an exciting opportunity to play our part in the overall reduction of plastic, which, it's becoming clear for all to see, has such a negative impact on our oceans."

At Hurtigruten, a ban on all unnecessary single-use plastic is due to come into force in July this year. It aims to

remove everything from plastic straws, drink mixers and plastic glasses to coffee lids and plastic bags, and become the world's first plastic-free cruise company.

"We have focused on the problem with plastic pollution for years," Hurtigruten CEO Daniel Skjeldam says. "There is a lot of talk about the impact plastic has on our oceans. But it's time to take action. By getting rid of single-use plastic on board all ships already by this summer, we will hopefully get others to follow. It is possible to act now, and the oceans do not deserve more hesitation."

Cleaner cruising

Over at Costa Cruises, bosses are intent on cutting food waste in half by 2020 and have introduced the 4GOODFOOD initiative. The company produces 54 million meals a year across the fleet and decided to review its food sustainability measures. It has collaborated with partners such as the Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity and Università degli Studi di Scienze Gastronomiche di Pollenzo to develop a pilot project that was tested aboard the Costa Diadema in 2016.

The project considered every aspect of food preparation and consumption on the ship. Staff training also played an important role, while the 'Taste Don't Waste' awareness campaign targeted cruisers by encouraging responsible



Environmental policies are essential in order to preserve marine life



Hurtigruten believes
the future is silent
and emission-free

Awareness of marine pollution is at an all-time high, thanks largely to the BBC documentary Blue Planet 2

behaviour, particularly in the buffet area.

The scheme yielded impressive results, with a more than 50 per cent reduction in food waste in 11 months, equivalent to saving 1,189 metric tons of carbon dioxide, or the emissions of 231 motor vehicles a year. As a result, 4GOODFOOD is now being implemented fleet-wide.

The measures will be welcomed by cruise passengers, who are well aware that they share the seas with fragile, precious creatures and ecosystems, a fact illustrated perfectly on a recent Saga cruise.

ORCA, a marine conservation charity whose network of volunteers collects data about whales and dolphins, had a team of volunteers on the Canada in the Fall itinerary aboard Saga Sapphire last autumn. The trip was one of many ORCA has run in partnership with Saga Cruises

and on 7 October, the team spotted a North Atlantic right whale, one of the most endangered creatures on the planet, with less than 500 left. Canada is one of the last places in the world where they are seen, but even in this region sightings are scarce.

ORCA Director Sally Hamilton said: "This is a first for ORCA, and it is incredible to think that our dedicated volunteers have managed to catch sight of something that is so rare. The North Atlantic right whale is on the brink of extinction, so any sightings that can shed light on their movements could help to protect the last remaining members of this species."

With such close proximity between cruise ships and endangered species, robust environmental policies are not just window-dressing; they are a moral obligation.

WORDS: NICK HARDING



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Win at selling the Caribbean

Ben Bouldin, associate vice president and managing director at Royal Caribbean International, shares his top tips on promoting the Caribbean and its islands



Symphony of the Seas is based in the Caribbean



The region offers fun for all the family

1 Incredible destinations

The Caribbean features some of the world's most picturesque destinations. Guests can visit the volcanoes of St. Kitts, take a dip in the blue rock pools in Aruba, dive shipwrecks in Grand Cayman or explore the Hato Caves in Curaçao. A relatively new addition to some Caribbean itineraries is Havana, Cuba. Royal Caribbean takes guests deeper into the island's distinct culture. Visitors can get a taste of Havana's nightlife to the sound of salsa music. Historic Santiago de Cuba is steeped in history with castles and cathedrals. Finally, Cienfuegos, coined the "Pearl of the South", features the best of the island's natural beauty in the winding forest trails of Parque El Nicho.

2 Extraordinary excursions

The Caribbean offers a range of once-in-a-lifetime shore excursions. Whether it's thrills or chills your guests are after, there's a trip for them. Our guests can embark on an epic 'Sea Trek' at Philipsburg, St. Maarten; this is a zero-gravity undersea stroll wearing a special helmet. Visitors to San Juan, Puerto Rico, can sample the best of the city during an immersive food and culture tour. Meanwhile, thrill seekers can take to the 500-foot-high Dragon's Breath zip line at Labadee, Haiti, Royal Caribbean's private beach destination.

"Many ships cruising the region are built for a warmer climate, bringing passengers closer to the ocean"

3 Superlative ships

The Caribbean has so much to offer guests who have their sights set on some winter sun. Not only that, many ships cruising the region are specifically built for a warmer climate, bringing passengers closer to the ocean than ever before. All four Royal Caribbean Oasis Class ships are based in the Caribbean this year. Symphony of the Seas joins Allure of the Seas sailing to the brand new Port of Miami, while sister ship Harmony of the Seas will continue sailing from Fort Lauderdale. Sailing from Port Canaveral, guests on board Oasis of the Seas will also have the opportunity to add a trip to Universal Studios to their Caribbean cruise, meaning two amazing holidays in one. Guests of all ages will find a wealth of incredible experiences waiting for them on board.



Viking Orion

Viking ocean ships are Scandi-cool and contemporary, and Orion is no different. According to the cruise line, the award-winning ship has been “thoughtfully created by experienced nautical architects and designers to enrich your interaction with your destination in every way”. We can’t wait to get on board



DAYTIME RELAXATION

The Wintergarden serves afternoon tea, complete with pastries and finger sandwiches. The LivNordic Spa is the place to go for relaxation and mental healing. Here guests can indulge in the Nordic Bathing Ritual, which detoxes and relaxes tired muscles. Travellers experience the benefits of hot and cold on the body, as they drift from sauna to Snow Grotto.



DINING

Manfredi's is home to fine Italian cuisine, while The Chef's Table offers a five-course tasting menu, accompanied by paired wines. The Restaurant is the ship's main dining area open for dinner each evening, and live cooking and open kitchens bring to life the international dishes served at the World Café. A guest favourite is Mamsen's, which serves Norwegian specialities, including Nordic pastries and open sandwiches.





ON-BOARD ACTIVITIES

Daily lectures cover a range of topics relating to the area you are visiting. These are led by expert historians who know how to engage the culturally curious traveller. Lectures focus on upcoming ports and their history and culture – a great precursor to actual visits to the ports. The sports deck features a walking track, games, croquet, golf and shuffleboard. Yoga classes are also held here.



BARS AND LOUNGES

Torshavn is a cabaret lounge perfect for after-dinner drinks from the collection of Armagnac, classic cocktails and a selection of craft beers also available in all bars: The Pool Bar, located near the Main Pool; The Star Theatre Lounge; The Explorer's Bar; and the Viking Bar. The Explorer's Lounge is a favoured gathering spot, while the multipurpose Theatre is home to lectures, talks and first-run films.



FAST FACTS

465

staterooms

930

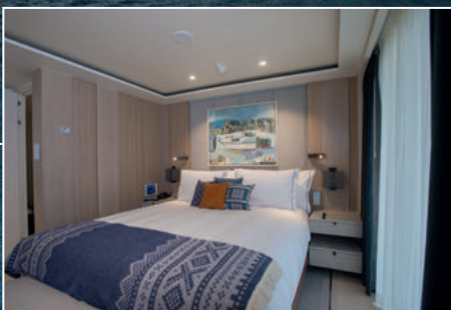
guests

745

feet long

47,800

tonnes



ACCOMMODATION

Viking's all-veranda ships offer a selection of staterooms, from Veranda Staterooms to the Explorer Suites with an abundance of extra perks and amenities. Whichever stateroom your client chooses, it will be designed in the understated elegance for which Viking is known.



Wyland, conservationist and artist, with his artwork for the ship's hull



The bottle break



NORWEGIAN BLISS: HISTORY MADE IN SEATTLE

Last month we were fortunate to be on the guest list for arguably the hottest ticket in cruise, the christening of the 4,004-guest capacity Norwegian Bliss, which also made history as the largest ship christened in Seattle. The interactive event was broadcast to over 2,500 guests in multiple venues throughout the ship. Following the bottle break by godfather, American radio personality Elvis Duran, performances by rock band Train, Gloria Gaynor and Sir Mix-a-Lot, plus local youth talent kept the crowds entertained. Earlier in the day, Norwegian's senior director of guest experience and innovation, Simon Murray, and Tom Norwalk, president and chief executive officer of Visit Seattle, hosted an

event on one of the top decks which saw skydivers descending over the ship bearing #NorwegianBliss banners, while president and chief executive of NCL Andy Stuart dropped in for a surprise appearance to present local performing group Northwest Tap Connection with a donation of \$10,000 in recognition of their continued support for the city and its community. "As the largest ship to ever be christened in Seattle, Norwegian Bliss' ceremony was our most exciting yet," said Stuart. "We thank the Emerald City for a very warm welcome and their partnership, and we are looking forward to continuing and strengthening our relationship with the Port of Seattle for years to come."



Godfather Elvis Duran launches the official bottle break



Three-time Grammy® award-winning rock band Train perform



Northwest Tap Connection performs





Bliss in Seattle



Bernard Meyer, managing director of Meyer Werft; Frank Del Rio, president and CEO of Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings; Elvis Duran, radio personality and godfather to Norwegian Bliss; Andy Stuart, president and CEO of Norwegian Cruise; Tim Meyer, managing director of Meyer Werft



Skydivers descend over Norwegian Bliss



Norwegian Cruise Line donated \$10,000 to Northwest Tap Connection of Seattle



The Debussy has capacity for 106 guests

CRYSTAL DEBUSSY JOINS THE FLEET

The city of Amsterdam played host to the official naming ceremony of the Crystal Debussy, the newest ship from Crystal River Cruises, in May 2018.

The ceremony took place during the ship's three-day stay in Amsterdam on its 10-day Splendours of the Rhine voyage, allowing guests aboard the sailing to participate in the traditional festivities, while Crystal crew members looked on from the decks of the ship.

Marking the occasion were Crystal's president and CEO, Tom Wolber, Crystal River Cruises' vice president and managing director, Walter Littlejohn, and Crystal Debussy's godmother, Broadway star Rachel York, who performed the song Defying Gravity live in scorching temperatures.

Wolber said: "Crystal River Cruises has raised the bar of excellence with each new ship, and now again as Crystal Debussy joins the fleet, effectively redefining true luxury in the river industry. At the heart of this achievement are the crew and officers, all of whom are members of the Crystal team that ensure that every detail of our guests' experience is seamless, from ship to shore."



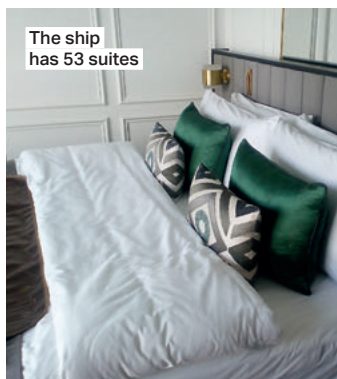
From left to right: Tom Wolber; Walter Littlejohn; Jeno Schnemann, captain of the Crystal Debussy; and the ship's godmother, Rachel York



Relax in comfort



Entertainment time at the ceremony



The ship has 53 suites



Take in the sun on the open deck

Q&A

STUART PERL

Managing director UK & Europe, AmaWaterways



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

In 2016 AmaWaterways co-owners Rudi & Kristin had seen the phenomenal growth of river cruising in the UK and Europe and decided the time was right to open a dedicated local office. To work with such a prestigious brand in such a dynamic market was an offer I could not refuse, and so on 1 March I began to build AmaWaterways UK from a blank sheet of paper.

I am very proud of how much we have achieved since then and fortunate to work with such a wonderful team. We continue to build relationships across the trade and the business is going from strength to strength.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT THE CRUISE INDUSTRY?

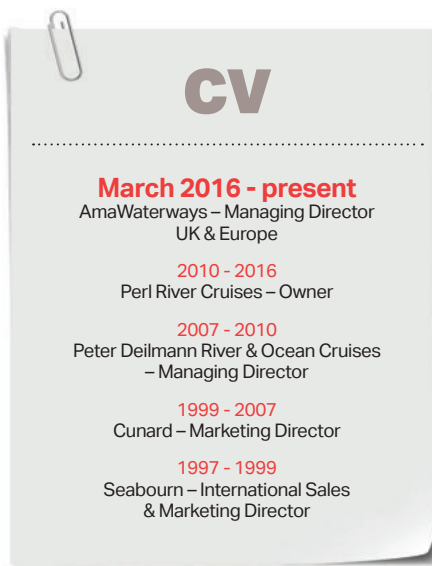
Cruise is like no other industry that I have ever worked in. It is dynamic, constantly evolving and unified by its co-operative and friendly spirit.

In spite of its spectacular growth, the river cruise transition is still in its infancy and the challenge of bringing awareness and understanding of this sector to our trade partners makes it a very exciting time.

HOW IS YOUR COMPANY DIFFERENT TO OTHER CRUISE LINES?

AmaWaterways is a unique organisation, and to work for a company with such vision, leadership and passion is an incredibly refreshing and rewarding experience.

'AmaPassion', as we call it, captures our corporate DNA of excellence, care, warmth and commitment that we deliver ashore and aboard our ships.



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

Our innovative business continues in 2019 with the launch of AmaMagna.

She will be twice the width of traditional river ships and will offer a watersports platform, choice of restaurants, wellness studio and spacious accommodation. These things may be the norm on ocean ships, but will be unique on Europe's rivers.

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

Agents who watched 'Cruising with Jane McDonald' or attended the CLIA Asia River Cruise Forum will know how special our Mekong voyage is. It is ideal for those who have travelled with us in Europe and are looking for something a little different.

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

Our average guest is 63, discerning and has an interest in seeing new destinations and meeting like-minded people.

They appreciate the quality of our state-of-the-art ships and fine cuisine, but they also enjoy an elegant, understated, homely and relaxed ambience.

Our Wellness Programme, hiking and cycling excursions, wine sailings and golf programme have all been designed to tap into some of their most common interests.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FACING CRUISE SALES?

We need to educate consumers about river cruising, so it continues to develop into a more mainstream holiday option.

The challenge for agents is learning to differentiate between operators, so they can match the right clients to the right brand. We, as operators, need to do a better job of positioning our brands, so when they see the name AmaWaterways, agents know what it stands for.

HOW DOES AMAWATERWAYS WORK WITH THE TRADE?

The trade is our lifeblood. Our sales and marketing strategy is trade-focused and I know that we are building a reputation for honesty and integrity with our partners through staying true to those principles.

We have invested heavily in fam trips and this year, 500 agents will have sailed with us.

Our BDMs are developing sales and marketing activities to generate sales that are rewarded by some of the most lucrative commercial agreements in the market.

TOP THREE TIPS FOR AGENTS SELLING CRUISE...

1 Don't try to be a jack-of-all trades and master of none. Understand your client profile and decide whether to specialise at the luxury, premium or economy level. Then learn that sector inside-out.

2 River cruise experience is your most valuable learning tool. If you haven't sailed with AmaWaterways yet but would like to do so, please contact us for a Fam Application Form.

3 A holiday should not be sold as a commodity, and the cheapest or the one with the most inclusions may not necessarily be the best for your client. Have belief and confidence in what you sell, and sell from the heart.

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FREE**

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- Land of the Northern Lights
- Festive cruise breaks



Columbus



Magellan



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*Applies to sales achieved over £5k for 2018/19 cruises. Subject to availability. Terms & Conditions apply. Offers may be withdrawn without notice. Offered for sale in the UK by South Quay Travel & Leisure Ltd trading as Cruise & Maritime Voyages. ABTA V9945. ATOL 4619. Calls cost 5p per minute plus your telephone company's access charge. 4378

15 PAGES
OF MARKETABLE
ITINERARIES,
SHIP REVIEWS &
DESTINATION
INSPIRATION

Your World



The Mediterranean includes some must-see attractions



Marella Explorer

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6 of the best... wellness cruises

THE CONCEPT OF WELLNESS ON BOARD IS GAINING PLENTY OF TRACTION. WE HIGHLIGHT SOME OF THE BEST CRUISES FOR NOURISHING MIND, BODY AND SOUL



INTEGRATING GOODNESS

Cruising the Mediterranean is, arguably, relaxing enough in itself for most people, but **Seabourn's** Wellness Cruises add another dose of tranquillity and health benefits for guests. From 6-20 October 2018, the 14-day Origins of Wellness with Dr. Andrew Weil – founder and director of the University of Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine in Tucson – takes in the sights along and off the southern coast of Greece, including Mykonos, Crete, Naxos, and Rhodes, as well as Syracuse, Italy, and Valletta, Malta.

The programme includes more than 25 complimentary workshops and discussions from authorities on integrative medicine. Other speakers include Ann Marie Chiasson, co-director of the Fellowship at the Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine in Tucson, as well as Vivian Kominos, an integrative physician at Hackensack Meridian Health and Medicine in New Jersey.

YOGA TIME

In recent years, tall ship cruise specialist **Star Clippers** has been running complimentary daily yoga sessions on certain yoga-themed sailings to relax mind, body and soul. Passengers can experience these sessions, which are taught by a qualified yoga teacher, out in the open air on the top deck of the characterful ships.

Talks on the philosophy of yoga, and advice for practicing the art at home, are also given on occasion. In the past, Star Clippers has hosted Ashtanga yoga – also known as power yoga. This is classed as a modern-day form of classical Indian yoga and includes breathing and movement techniques.

For the remainder of 2018, the cruise line has a range of specific sailings available for yoga-loving guests, including the Western Mediterranean, Mediterranean and Thailand. There will also be a number of yoga-themed cruises in 2019.



O TO BE HEALTHY

Holland America Line has partnered with O, The Oprah Magazine, to deliver a range of wellness activities designed to spread happiness and peacefulness.

The most recent sailing, which departed in March 2018 on a seven-day Caribbean itinerary aboard *Nieuw Amsterdam*, included morning meditation sessions and classes on healthy eating, as well as beauty talk sessions. It has also been announced that Holland America will be bringing O's Reading Room to all ships in its fleet.

Upcoming itineraries include a seven-day Alaska round trip from Seattle, departing 11 August 2018, where guests will be joined by five of the magazine's editors, along with Dr. Shefali Tsabary, clinical psychologist, author and international speaker; Laura Lippman, New York Times bestselling author; and Sara Auster, sound therapist, meditation teacher and artist.

WAVES AND WEIGH-INS

Travelling the high seas is, of course, a fantastic way to enjoy delicious cuisine, but for those concerned that all that food might add a few inches to their waistlines, Weight Watchers cruises could come to the rescue. Working in partnership with **MSC Cruises**, the company has created an experience, labelled a 'Voyage to Wellbeing', that appeals to the calorie-conscious, and those looking to lose an inch or two.

Cooking demonstrations are also provided, while a variety of fitness classes – from cardio dance to Pilates – allow guests to work out while they cruise. Wellness seminars also make an appearance.

The next sailing, on board *MSC Seaside*, departs from 10 November, calling at Miami, Puerto Rico, St. Maarten and the Bahamas.

HAPPINESS ON THE RIVER

AmaWaterways provides a fleet of complimentary bikes, which guests can use on guided hikes and excursions in many cities.

In addition to this, the cruise line has Wellness Hosts that hold a number of fitness classes – and also offers lectures – as part of its AmaWaterways Wellness Programme, which is available on the *AmaLyra*, *AmaDante*, *AmaDolce*, *AmaCerto*, *AmaPrima* and *AmaSonata* in 2018, and fleet-wide in 2019.

"Being active and healthy while travelling is something that is personally so important to me, and, as a company, AmaWaterways has been embracing active travel for more than a decade," said Kristin Karst, executive vice president and co-owner of AmaWaterways. "We believe guests are looking to take steps to ensure that their holiday is an extension of their lifestyle, and we continue to introduce new ways to remain healthy while on board."

Each ship in the fleet also features a massage room, fitness area, whirlpool or swimming pool and a walking track.



BODY, SOUL, AND FITNESS

Hapag-Lloyd has three distinct programmes aimed at wellness – Body & Soul, IN2BALANCE, and BEYOU.

The Body & Soul programme offers lectures and courses focusing on movement and nutrition, as well as relaxation techniques and the philosophy behind Pilates. The next Body & Soul cruise is a 10-day trip from Cape Town to Buenos Aires, departing 10 December 2018.

IN2BALANCE, like Body & Soul, includes relaxation methods, but combines them with yoga, burn-out prevention exercises, t'ai chi, shiatsu, nutritional advice and interval training. The next cruise departs 29 July 2018, Hamburg – Hamburg, on the *MS Europa 2*.

Meanwhile, BEYOU, which is exclusively on the *Europa 2*, is presented by Olympic ski champion Maria Höfl-Riesch. This is a tailored programme based on individual analysis and includes healthy eating tips.



The Rhine:
enchanted
at night



Float away on a festive cruise

European Christmas market cruises are on the increase – and guaranteed to fill clients with seasonal cheer

SALES TIPS

- Flexible travel options include air, rail, coach and ferry
- Switch sell to city break clients – festive itineraries are ideal for first-time river cruisers
- There are short and long itineraries to suit all budgets, with a wide range of inclusions such as wine with meals and even an open bar on many lines
- Ships moor in the centre of historic towns and cities
- Authentic experiences are found both ashore in the markets and on board, where menus feature regional specialities

A river cruise is the perfect way to discover the charms of European Christmas markets, which are steeped in tradition and history. Ships moor in the centre of towns and cities and the fairy-tale wooden stalls decked in lights are often just a short walk from the docking spot.

Running from the end of November, Germany is the main hub for festive markets, with many lines offering cruises along the Rhine and Danube, but they can also be found in neighbouring countries, including France.

In addition to escorted excursions, these cruises allow ample free time for

passengers to soak up the atmosphere and enjoy a warming glass of mulled wine as they browse stalls filled with local crafts, toys and decorations.

Seasonal itineraries

With many itineraries shorter than typical river cruises of a week or more, festive sailings are a good way to tempt new-to-cruise clients to embark on a river cruise, as well as providing a different experience for seasoned cruisers. This year there are even more selling opportunities for agents as lines expand their seasonal offerings.

A newcomer to the scene is **U by**

Uniworld, offering four and seven-night Christmas cruises for the 'young at heart' on its cool black ships, The A and The B. **Riviera Travel** and **Scenic** have also added new itineraries for 2018, with Riviera introducing a five-night Danube cruise leading in at £879 and Scenic debuting a seven-night Rhine and Danube sailing which includes a gingerbread-making class. **National Geographic Expeditions**, known for its cultural journeys, is offering its first Christmas market cruise from Nuremberg to Vienna. The seven-night all-inclusive sailing, in partnership with Scenic, is priced from £2,020. ➤

River cruising: Christmas markets

The Danube is
a popular choice



SELL IT

AVALON WATERWAYS offers a four-night Basel to Frankfurt cruise, including a tour of Strasbourg, home to one of Europe's oldest festive markets. Departing 28 November, fares are from £1,900pp, including flights and VIP home pick-up.
0800 668 1843
avaloncruises.co.uk

U BY UNIWORLD's four-night A Merry Little Christmas round-trip cruise on The A from Budapest, departs 16 December, from £1,299pp cruise-only. The price includes a local celebrity DJ party, festive mixology class and five excursions.
0845 678 5656
ubyuniworld.com

CRYSTAL RIVER CRUISES has a seven-night Vienna to Budapest itinerary, departing 5 December, from £3,055pp. The cruise-only price includes all on-board meals and drinks, butler service, excursions, tips and overseas transfers.
020 7399 7601
crystalcruises.co.uk

There are festive sailings to suit every budget, and the **River Cruise Line** has very competitively priced cruises on its homely vessel Lady Anne, chartered exclusively for the line. The three-night Rhine cruise is priced from £399, including coach and ferry travel.

Tim Fleming, sales and business development manager for The River Cruise Line, said: "Christmas markets cruises are some of our most popular, especially with those clients trying river cruising for the very first time. The itineraries tend to be short, so give a great introduction to the river cruise experience and a chance to visit some of our most popular destinations."

Another good-value option is the three-night round-trip Paris cruise on **CroisiEurope's** cosy hotel barge MS Raymond, priced from £532 for a 9 November sailing and including an open bar for yuletide toasts.

For clients seeking a luxurious experience, **APT's** 14-night Imperial Europe itinerary from Amsterdam to Vienna is now fully inclusive, with excursions that include private festive concerts – and on **Crystal River Cruises** every passenger has butler service. Uniworld offers a range of Christmas

market cruises including family-friendly 'Generations' departures, which are perfect for a festive cruise with the whole family. These include the seven-day Classic Christmas Markets itinerary from Frankfurt to Nuremberg, departing 15 December, and the seven-night Parisian Royal Holiday, departing 20 December.

For an extra special treat, the baking queen Mary Berry is joining **Emerald Waterways'** seven-night Regensburg to Budapest cruise aboard the new ship Emerald Destiny. The star of The Great British Bake Off will host a Q&A session and afternoon tea with passengers, along with a gala dinner with a menu that she has chosen. Departing on 1 December, fares start from £1,795.

Unique experiences

Neil Barclay, **Viking River Cruises** head of sales, said: "Christmas cruises are a unique and special way to get into the festive spirit, taking in the markets and atmosphere of some of the loveliest cities in Europe. They also present a great selling opportunity for agents to encourage a new-to-cruise customer or a seasoned cruiser looking for something different.

"Viking offers Christmas cruises on

the Rhine and Danube, and with prices starting from £1,495 per person, so it's easy to see why they are so popular. We are now selling for 2019, so my advice for agents is to encourage customers to book early to avoid disappointment."

Other operators also looking to the future include **Shearings Holidays**, which will feature three new festive river cruise itineraries for 2019 in partnership with **A-ROSA**. The new products are five and seven-day Christmas market cruises on the Rhine and a week-long cruise from Paris on the Seine. Prices start from £778.

Next year **AmaWaterways** is introducing a seven-night cruise from Budapest, and this year passengers will already be in for a treat as the line is decorating its ships and enhancing Christmas itineraries with garlands on every cabin door, carol singing and a visit from Santa with presents for every passenger.

Jamie Lizou, AmaWaterways' sales, marketing and digital director, said: "Guests are wanting to get into the festive spirit earlier and earlier, so having our programme start in the final week of November and run into the New Year gives ample opportunity to find a date and a river to suit them."





The world. Within reach.



Vienna



Budapest

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6 days from £849^{PP}

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- Enjoy a guided tour of fascinating Budapest and explore its acclaimed Yuletide markets
- Soak up the magical classical ambience of Vienna on our guided tour and enjoy its inspirational, historic markets
- Discover delightful Bratislava on our guided tour and wander the atmospheric markets of the restored old town

Selected departures in
December 2018

ENCHANTING RHINE & YULETIDE MARKETS

5 days from £699^{PP}

- Enjoy a guided tour of Bonn and explore its traditional Yuletide market
- Cruise through the spectacular, world-famous Rhine Gorge in all its wintry glory
- Discover historic Koblenz on our guided tour, dramatically situated at the confluence of the Rhine and Moselle Rivers
- Soak up the magical ambience of Cologne and explore its seven superb markets
- Visit the charming wine town of Rüdesheim, and its picture-perfect Christmas market

Selected departures in
December 2018

SO MUCH IS INCLUDED

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YOUR FRIENDLY AGENCY SALES TEAM





Take your Meds

A cruise around the Mediterranean offers the perfect tonic for mind, soul and senses – with plenty to keep travellers coming back for more

The Mediterranean Sea has long been a key route for traders and, as a result, its ports of call are – or lead to – some of the world's must-see attractions.

With so much on offer, the Med's highlights can't be experienced in one journey, which is why it's such a great sell for agents.

A 'typical' Western Med cruise could include Palma, Majorca, where many ships home port for their summer season. Throw in wonderful, enticing Barcelona; add a French Riviera resort or two such as St Tropez, Monte Carlo or Nice; then enhance with one or two ports in Italy.

Or you could venture east and discover Greece or Croatia, where highlights include the ancient Acropolis

and the breathtaking and historic port city of Dubrovnik.

For Lynn Narraway, managing director UK and Ireland at **Seabourn**, the attraction of the Med is wide-ranging. "There are no long flights to deal with. The weather is wonderfully reliable. You see familiar destinations from an entirely new perspective," she said.

Elaine Gillard, senior sales and marketing manager for **Crystal Cruises**, agrees. "The Mediterranean boasts some of the most beautiful and interesting cities in the world. Whether guests want culture, history, great food and wine or exhilarating adventures, they're spoilt for choice on a Med cruise," she said.

Princess Cruises reports Med cruises are its most popular choice for families.

Princess's vice president UK and Europe, Tony Roberts, said: "With no-fly options from Southampton, travelling out of ports such as Barcelona, Rome and Athens, there is something to suit everyone.

"The Mediterranean offers stunning weather, centuries of history at some of the most famous cultural sites in the world, and fun for the entire family, both on board and ashore."

What's more, a Med cruise is a great chance to experience a brand-new ship. **Royal Caribbean's** Symphony of the Seas, which launched in April, and **MSC's** Seaview, which launched in June, are both sailing the Med this summer.

Celebrity Edge, which launches later this year, will spend its first summer in the Med in 2019.



Dubrovnik: charming and characterful



Glamorous Monaco



SELLING TIPS

1

Suggest second-timers who've done the main ports try an itinerary taking in Valencia, Provence, the Italian islands or the Dalmatian Coast

2

The Med is a competitive market for cruise lines, so look out for value-added offers, such as beverage packages or shore excursions that make budgets go further

3

'Day trips' to major cities such as Rome can involve a long coach journey to and from the port, so to experience the sights at a more leisurely pace, suggest a pre- or post-cruise add-on

4

Grand Prix tickets are always highly sought after. Suggest clients book a cruise that coincides with one of the major European F1 events, such as Barcelona or Monaco

5

For guests travelling on cruises that don't include accompanied expert tours, booking a guided excursion to historical attractions such as Ephesus or Olympia is recommended to get the most out of the visit

NEW OPTIONS

In 2019, Crystal will sail an expanded Mediterranean season from April to October, with Crystal Serenity offering six-to-13-day options, including a golf-themed cruise from Lisbon to Monte Carlo, departing 12 August.

Sister company Crystal Yacht Expedition Cruises' 62-guest Crystal Esprit has added new Mediterranean cruises next year – among them a seven-day sailing from Malaga to Barcelona and an eight-day round-trip from Nice, including exclusive access to the Monaco Grand Prix.

Emerald Waterways river cruise fans will be thrilled to learn the company is operating its first ocean cruise itineraries in 2019, sailing along Croatia's Dalmatian coast in the Adriatic Sea.

Emerald Waterways' global brand curator David Winterton said: "Our guests are always looking for new destinations, and the Mediterranean offers them the chance to explore a combination of culture, history and beauty.

"Since the launch of our Dalmatian Coast brochure we have seen phenomenal demand, with our original sailing dates selling out in just a few weeks. Further dates are also selling quickly, highlighting how popular this destination is proving."

Meanwhile, **Oceania** has 40 Med cruises for the 2019 season and is adding new ports to entice repeat cruisers, such as Castellón, a 13th-century secret hideaway on Spain's orange grove-dotted Costa Azahar. ➤

ROYAL APPOINTMENT

Royal Caribbean's newly renovated Independence of the Seas – a favourite among Brits – will sail out of Southampton on 19 October 2019 for a seven-night France, Spain and Portugal cruise, calling at Le Havre (for Paris/Normandy), Vigo and Lisbon. Prices start at £933pp for an interior stateroom. royalcaribbean.co.uk

PERFECT 10

Oceania Cruises has a 10-day Mediterranean Marvels cruise on board Sirena, departing Civitavecchia, Italy, on 8 June 2018, calling at Amalfi/Positano, Palermo, Valletta, Malta, Ibiza, Castellón, Tarragona (for Barcelona), Marseille (for Provence), Saint-Tropez and Monte Carlo. Prices start from £3,549pp. oceaniacruises.com

GREECE IS THE WORD

CroisiEurope has a 10-day Mediterranean Colours cruise from Catania to Limassol via Katakolon, Itea, Piraeus, Santorini and Rhodes, including the Corinth Canal. Excursions to Delphi and Paphos are included in the price, which is £1,399pp, departing 29 November 2018. Optional excursions include the Acropolis and Mount Etna. croisieurope.co.uk

LATINO LANDINGS

Seabourn's 11-day Italy & Spanish Splendours itinerary on Seabourn Odyssey between Civitavecchia and Barcelona takes in Naples, Trapani, Monte Carlo, La Joliette, Sete, Mahon, Ibiza, Cartagena and Valencia, departing 27 October 2018. Cruise-only prices start at £2,999pp. Gratuities and most drinks are included. seabourn.com



The iconic Acropolis, Athens

WHEN IN ROME

Voyages to Antiquity has lined up Antiques Roadshow expert Lars Tharp for its 15-day Italian and Adriatic Highlights cruise from Rome to Venice on 5 September 2019. Also on board will be historian Dr Joyce Salisbury and writer Christopher Walton. From £2,795pp, including a two-night hotel stay in Rome. voyagestoantiquity.com

ON THE EDGE

Celebrity Cruises' Celebrity Edge sails a seven-night Spain, France and Italy fly-cruise on 22 June 2019, from Barcelona, calling at Valencia, Ibiza, Marseilles, Villefranche, Livorno for Florence/Pisa and Civitavecchia. Prices start at £2,569pp in an ocean view stateroom, including flights, a Classic Drinks package and unlimited WiFi. celebritycruises.co.uk

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

Emerald Waterways has up to £300pp off on selected 2019 departure dates on its new eight-day Islands of Dalmatia cruise, on board the 18-cabin Adriatic Princess II, sailing between Trogir and Dubrovnik. Book by 30 September 2018 for discounts, including a £200 saving on a category C cabin, with prices from £1,845pp. emeraldwaterways.co.uk

SPECIAL PERFORMANCE

Silversea's 2019 Opera Voyages cruises feature performances by soloists from the Accademia Teatro alla Scala of Milan. Passengers can choose a seven-day cruise on Silver Spirit from Barcelona to Civitavecchia on 25 April 2019, from £2,700, or an 11-day Piraeus round-trip cruise on Silver Shadow, departing 22 October, costing £4,770. silversea.com



FREE BUSINESS CLASS FLIGHTS

Your clients can enjoy **free Business Class flights** plus overseas **transfers** on 2019 voyages to the Mediterranean and Northern Europe. They can enjoy their free flights from 11 UK gateways: **HEATHROW | GATWICK | BIRMINGHAM | LEEDS BRADFORD | MANCHESTER | NEWCASTLE | GLASGOW | EDINBURGH | ABERDEEN | JERSEY | BELFAST**

For more information or for reservations please call **0207 340 0700**, visit silversea.com or email salesuk@silversea.com

BOOK BY 31 JULY 2018 Terms & Conditions apply. Visit www.silversea.com/terms-and-conditions for complete Terms and Conditions.



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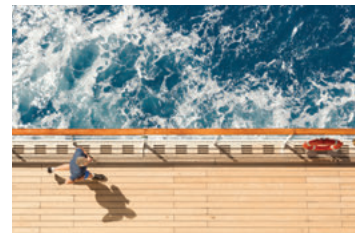
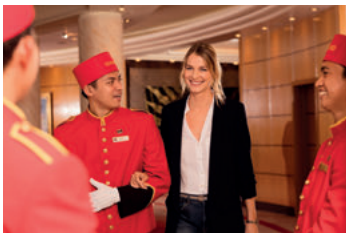
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Win at the 2018
Cruise Stars Awards



Cruise Stars Awards 2018

The Cruise Stars Awards have been created to reward industry talent across the country – here's your final chance to get involved



With sponsors including Oceania, Saga, Fred. Olsen, Silversea, Cruise & Maritime Voyages, Royal Caribbean, AmaWaterways and MSC, the Cruise Stars Awards are fast becoming the industry awards to enter, but you'd better be quick as the deadline is fast approaching.

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

2018 CATEGORY HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- Nine regional travel agent awards, designed to recognise and honour cruise talent across the country
- New to Cruise Champion: This category is open to individuals who are working within travel agency businesses in the UK. Entrants need to demonstrate how they have increased their new-to-cruise customers within their business
- Rising Star under 35s (Cruise Line and Travel Agent categories): A Rising Star is someone aged 35 or under on 15 September 2018 and making a significant contribution to their organisation. They should display the potential to be one of the

leaders of tomorrow, or to help to shape the industry in the future

- The winner of the Overall Travel Agent Rising Star award will win a seven-night European river cruise for two, plus £1,500 in cooperative marketing funds for the winner's agency, courtesy of AmaWaterways.

All categories are free to enter. Finalists will be invited to a prestigious lunchtime event at London's Grand Connaught Rooms on 17 November 2018, with our winners receiving industry-wide recognition, as well as the opportunity to be featured in the pages of Cruise Trade News in 2019. The judging panel is made up of distinguished specialists and expert industry representatives, together with our magazine editors.

With 21 categories in total, there's something to suit everyone, no matter what your experience or role. To enter the awards, you can nominate yourself or be nominated by a colleague.

Get your entry in before the extended deadline of 20 July. You'll find easy to follow entry guidelines online at www.cruisestarsawards.com

www.cruisestarsawards.com



Wave Awards Entries Open July 18

WAVE AWARDS 2019



Categories for Cruise Lines,
Travel Agents, Tour Operators,
Ports and Destinations

**Your chance to win a coveted
Wave Awards trophy**

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Sponsors



To enter go online at
www.thewaveawards.com

Marella Rocks!

The christening cruise of Marella Cruise's first ship, Explorer, gave Ibiza a run for its money with a healthy dose of glamour, music and fireworks...

It's always exciting to walk into your cabin for the first time, but flinging open the balcony doors is not normally my first inclination.

Some people might gravitate towards the bathroom, while others may be more interested in the quality of the bed linen.

However, the 962-cabin/1,924-passenger Marella Explorer has a rather interesting feature on its balconies, for those passengers lucky enough to book a balcony stateroom: a hammock.

So the first thing I did after boarding in Palma for the ship's christening in May, was treat myself to a relaxing 20 minutes in said hammock, accompanied by the Balearic

spring sunshine and frontline city and harbour views.

Following four weeks in dry dock and a multi-million pound makeover, Marella Explorer is all about space, choice and flexibility, and is the first ship to launch under the Marella Cruises name. There are 10 restaurants, 10 bars, new premium dining options and 12 brand-new shows courtesy of its new partnership with ted, a leisure sector entertainment provider.

Accommodation is varied and includes family cabins and suites, and more single and accessible cabins than the rest of the fleet. Cleverly, not one cabin – even those which are inside – feels poky or dark. A nice

touch are the water dispensers on every deck; not only are they eco-friendly, they are also ideal for filling up the carafes in every cabin.

All large balcony cabins feature hammocks, including junior suites. Book your client into one of the top 100 suites and they will receive Clarins products in the bathrooms, interactive Navigate TV, clothes pressing, a Lavazza coffee machine and a double-width balcony.

The ship's design is modern, colourful and in parts, quite quirky. Colour-coded staircases help people get around. There are lots of interactive features. But while it does have a grown-up feel in the main, ➤





/// Marella Explorer is a fantastic new addition to the fleet. The staff and service are outstanding – the best I have experienced on a ship. Explorer has very modern and spacious cabins and the entertainment is second to none. The atmosphere is brilliant, with the staff always happy to help in any way they can. **///**

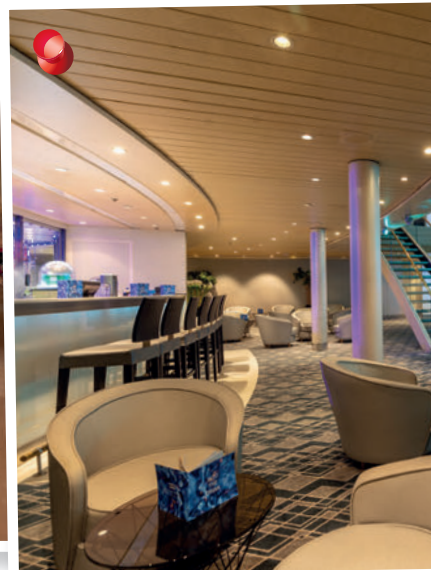
Andrew McDonough
Cruise 1st



Indigo Bar and Club



The Snack Shack



Craig David performed at the launch event

there's plenty to satisfy younger guests, too, with a gamer zone, family deck and Hideout hangout space.

The Lounge features funky colour-changing lighting; the Atrium offers a huge wall of shimmering sequins. Move up to deck 11 and you'll find a row of cute bike stools at Scoops ice cream parlour, which, by the way, serves up flavours such as gin and tonic and prosecco, as well as all the traditional favourites.

The ship also boasts the largest Champneys spa at sea – a destination in itself. This 900sq m haven of pampering and relaxation features spacious treatment rooms, exclusive treatments, a relaxation room, thermal garden, couples suites with private sauna and steam room, and treatment cabins with hot tubs.

For a ship spa, prices are also extremely reasonable; a Champneys Pick Me Up Facial costs £49 for 25 minutes, while the

exclusive Marella Massage costs £99 for a blissful 80 minutes.

Indigo bar, club and casino features floor-to-ceiling windows and colour block furnishings. Open till the early hours, it's a lively part of the ship and features a bar, dancefloor, card tables, an LED roulette table, DJ booth and The Emulator – an interactive touchscreen DJ deck.

With 10 restaurants and 10 bars, there's no shortage of food and drink options. Highlights include The Dining Club, which serves experimental French cuisine and tasting menus; Surf & Turf Steakhouse where guests can watch the chef cooking on an open grill; and the light and airy The Mediterranean on deck 11, which has a retractable roof for daytime casual dining.

Staying with the casual theme, there's plenty to keep hunger at bay during pool or sea days – we loved dining in the Snack Shack's colourful booths with their own



The Lounge



Champneys Spa



Bar 53



Coffee Port



/// Marella Explorer exceeded all my expectations. A lot of thought has been put into the decor, with bright colours and open spaces that give way to large windows with views out to the ocean. We ate in a range of restaurants and the food was exceptional. The ship is guaranteed to become a firm favourite among holidaymakers. **///**

Paul Brandwood
Travel House

destination names (Havana, Barcelona) on deck 11.

Outside, there's the main pool deck with two spa baths. The pool is split in two by a stage in the middle – this is where the entertainment team run daily activities from. With a private and exclusive vibe, the adults-only Veranda on deck 14 features rows of cute private cabanas, Balinese beds, lounge call buttons and great views from the front of the ship.

The retail offering is also pushing the boundaries of on-board shopping with some great brands and interesting technology. Ladies will want to check out the interactive OPI nail colour visualising device, which shows you different polish shades on the nails; it's apparently the only one in the world.

The Broadway Show Lounge on deck 6 is impressive – it's the biggest in the Marella fleet – and looks like a proper West

End theatre. There are 12 new shows on offer for guests to enjoy.

But we were here for the ship's christening, and as crowds gathered round the pool in anticipation of the ceremony, all wearing colour-changing LED wristbands for the occasion, drinks were flowing and the 600 plus agents were having the time of their lives.

Marella sure knows how to put on a party – as the sun set and special guest star Craig David took to the stage in front of the pool with a roster of old and new-school tunes, the atmosphere reminded me a little of Ibiza Rocks on our neighbouring island.

The final word goes to the ship's captain Peter Harris: "It's a great honour for me to be on this ship. Without her crew she is nothing. However, it's a much larger team that pulls it all together – we're the friendliest crew afloat."



Hammocks on the balconies

BOOK IT

A seven-night Magic of Spain cruise on Marella Explorer costs from £1,233pp. Based on two adults sharing an inside cabin on an all-inclusive basis. Departs 29 September.

The Wave Awards 2019

Committed to cruise and the industry? Then you'll want to get involved in The Wave Awards 2019...

With 27 million passengers due to cruise globally this year, the cruise industry is on the up – and there's never been a more exciting time to be a part of it.

Now in their fourth year, The Wave Awards celebrate the cream of the UK cruise industry. They recognise and reward excellence and innovation in a business that is continuously evolving to deliver an exceptional experience, both on board and ashore.

Open to cruise lines, travel agents, tourist boards, ports and anyone involved in the UK cruise industry (UK-based or abroad), The Wave Awards provide the

opportunity to showcase your brand, expertise and contribution to cruising.

The judging panel is made up of industry leaders, travel experts and representatives of the media. There is also a special 'Favourites' section, voted for by the public.

Last year's cruise agent category was so popular that it's been expanded to include Best Retail Agent, Best Non-Retail Agent, Best Online Agent, Best Agent Consortia and Best Homeworking Agency.

Also new for 2019 is the Best Environmental Initiative category, in recognition of cruise lines' efforts to address this pressing issue.



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Saga

Saga is all about luxury small ship cruising, with classic British refinement and boutique hotel styled ships. With award-winning dining and service, and with so much included in the cost, its cruises are great value for money. Forthcoming new build, Spirit of Discovery, is set to be a game-changing ship.

Sponsors



Accord Marketing

Accord is the UK's leading travel marketing agency. Founded in 1988, the company works with over 150 clients operating in travel, tourism, hospitality and leisure. Everything is joined-up, achieving real results by using the right channels, targeting the right audiences and developing the right strategy.



Azamara Club Cruises

Azamara Club Cruises® offers sophisticated sailing with authentic cultural experiences. Azamara specialises in Destination Immersion, meaning longer stays, more overnights, and night touring. No other cruise line spends as much time in port – allowing travellers a richer stay in the destinations they visit.



Cruise & Maritime Voyages

Cruise & Maritime Voyages is Britain's fastest-growing leading independent cruise line. With a fleet of six smaller to mid-size cruise ships, CMV upholds a traditional British cruise experience, offering a home-from-home ambience, delicious cuisine and stylish entertainment, delivered with friendly and attentive service.



Previous winners take the spotlight

HOW TO ENTER

Head to thewaveawards.com to enter. The 2019 awards are open for entries on 17 July and the deadline is 19 October. Register your details to create an account and access the entry forms – don't forget to read the judges' recommendations to help you focus your submission.

Once you're ready, complete the entry form and upload the supporting material (photos, videos and other documents up to 5MB).

Submit your entry and pay the entry fee of £99 per category online. If you enter five categories, you get a sixth one free.

Finalists will be invited to a prestigious black-tie event and dinner at London's Connaught Rooms on 7 March 2019.

www.thewaveawards.com

CRUISE LINE CATEGORIES

- Best Luxury Cruise Line
- Best Luxury River Cruise Line
- Best Ocean Cruise Line
- Best River Cruise Line
- Best Premium Cruise Line
- Best Expedition Cruise Line
- Best for Solo Travellers (ocean or river)
- Best Specialist Cruise Line
- Best New Ship Launch (ocean or river)
- Best Value for Money
- Best Family Cruise Line
- Best Environmental Initiative

PORTS & DESTINATIONS CATEGORIES

- Best Destination
- Best Port
- Best Excursion

INDUSTRY CATEGORIES

- Best Transfer
- Best Environmental Initiative
- Best Advertising, Marketing and PR
- Best Escorted Tour Operator
- Best Technology
- Best Digital or Web-Based Platform or Service

ON-BOARD CATEGORIES

The on-board categories are open to both ocean and river cruise lines.

- Best for Accommodation
- Best for Cuisine
- Best for Enrichment
- Best for Entertainment
- Best for Wellbeing/Spas

AGENT CATEGORIES

- Best Retail Agent
- Best Non-Retail Agent
- Best Online Agent
- Best Agent Consortia
- Best Homeworking Agency

WAVE
AWARDS 2019



Our Judges

Rebecca Barnes

Editor, Cruise Trade News and Cruise Destinations

Karen Pasquali-Jones

Editor, World of Cruising

Giles Hawke

CEO, Cosmos

Jos Dewing

MD, Voyages to Antiquity

Lucia Rowe

Head of sales, A-ROSA

Andrew Squirrell

MD, Titan Travel

Michelle Andjel

PR director, P&O Cruises/Carnival UK

Angus Struthers

Marketing director, Cunard

Antonio Paradiso

MD UK & Ireland, MSC Cruises

Sally Winfield

COO, Accord Group

Erin Johnson

Marketing director, Silversea

Richard Twynam

MD UK & Ireland, Azamara

Lynn Narraway

MD, Holland America Line and Seabourn

Jeannine Williamson

Freelance journalist

Dave Monk

Cruise writer, Shipmonk

Heidi Fuller-Love

Freelance journalist

Lesley Bellew

Freelance journalist



Crystal Cruises

Crystal has been the standard-bearer for excellence in luxury travel and cruising, remaining the number one choice amongst the savviest world travellers. Whether by ocean, river, yacht or air, each Crystal experience is designed to showcase the world and its wonders in the most remarkable ways.



Fred Olsen Cruises

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines offers a classic, friendly experience across its fleet of four intimate ocean cruise ships, and dedicated European river cruise ship. The size of the ships means that guests are able to experience itineraries that take them much closer to ports and areas which the larger vessels cannot reach.



Titan Travel

For 40 years, Titan Travel has been taking travellers to inspirational parts of the world. The award-winning ocean and river cruises feature sailings aboard two exclusively chartered river cruise ships. Curating escorted holidays, unforgettable memories are created – albums of 'perfect moments' that guests share.



"Our guests feel they are immersed in the destinations they are visiting"

Bekkie Skipp, Holland America Line's business development manager for North and Scotland, discusses martinis, musicals and her ultimate sales tip...

Why is your cruise line the best of all cruise lines?

Holland America Line offers couples and families alike the opportunity to cruise aboard five-star mid-sized 'hotels at sea'. The ships offer a classic style with state-of-the-art enhancements and some fantastic enrichment programmes. Our guests truly feel they are immersed in the destinations they are visiting.

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

I'd say James Bond – classic, elegant but always re-inventing to move with the times. And of course you can always get a mean Martini on HAL – shaken, not stirred!

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

My colleagues would say there are too many to mention. Literally falling out of my car when I upgraded from a Golf to a Tiguan. Breaking my wheelie brochure trolley halfway up the escalator on the way to a consumer show. The list is endless...



New Zealand is on the bucket list

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

There are always questions like "Will I be able to get off the ship?", and "Do the elevators go to all decks?" I always tell travel agent partners to keep things simple and sell a cruise just as they would do a hotel – and nobody ever asks those type of questions about a hotel!

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

Nieuw Amsterdam used to be my favourite but now we have the beautiful Pinnacle-class Koningsdam it's hard to choose – I love the cinema screen out on the pool deck area. And we have a second Pinnacle Class ship, Nieuw Statendam, arriving this December!

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

I'd have to say it's our pan-Asian restaurant Tamarind, which serves (among other Asian delicacies), a beautiful red Thai curry. It's so good. I also love the light jasmine tea at the start to set the ambience.

Which port would you definitely disembark in? What would you do there?

Once my daughters are a little older, I'd love to travel all over the world – and discover many of those incredible cruise destinations. I love visiting new places and

discovering new things to do in places I have already visited.

And which port would you opt to stay on board – and why?

Only on sea days will I tend to stay on board – I've got to have some time for the gym and the spa!

Which cruise is on your bucket list?

Australia and New Zealand on our lovely Noordam – I've been to Oz three times but still only visited a tiny part, and I've never been to New Zealand.

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

In a dream world, I'd be on stage at one of London's West End theatres singing my little head off (badly) in anything. I love all musicals and have School of Rock and Matilda theatre visits coming up over the next year.



Bekkie loves the red Thai curry at Tamarind

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BE A CRUISE STAR!

WHO SHOULD ENTER?

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

WHY ENTER?

- ★ Receive recognition from across the cruise industry
- ★ Celebrate your achievements
- ★ Get rewarded for your work
- ★ Being a finalist shows you are an industry leader
- ★ Finalists are invited to the awards presentation lunch on 16th November 2018 at the De Vere Grand Connaught Rooms in London
- ★ The overall Travel Agent Rising Star will win a 7-night 2019 European River Cruise for 2 people and £1,500 in cooperative marketing funds for the winner's agency provided by AmaWaterways.

FREE TO ENTER!

To view the categories and criteria and enter online visit
www.cruisestarsawards.com

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TRADE NEWS

Win a private tour of Sri Lanka in our agents' prize draw... and you don't have to be 50+ to travel!

We know how important it is to reward our trade agents. That's why we've come up with yet another amazing incentive, and this time the big prize is a private tour of Sri Lanka for two.

This is how it works. For 12 weeks this summer, book any Saga holiday, ocean cruise or river cruise and we'll automatically enter you into our weekly prize draw to win £50 in lifestyle vouchers. Those 12 lucky winners will then be entered into a final draw to win a 10-night private tour of Sri Lanka for two. You can take whoever you wish, and neither of you has to be over 50 to travel! With one entry for every booking you make between June 11 and August 31 2018 – two for escorted tours – the more you book, the more likely you are to win!

New Guaranteed Departures on all tours

From June 11, 2018 all of our Escorted Tours can be booked with the confidence that every tour date we advertise is 100% guaranteed to depart. This means your customers won't be disappointed by a last-minute cancellation if not enough customers book their departure.

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Find us on social media  **Saga Trade Team**

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*Every Saga holiday or cruise booked between June 11 and 31 August 2018 will automatically be entered into our weekly prize draw to win £50 in lifestyle vouchers. Those winners will then be entered into one final prize draw to win a private tour of Sri Lanka for two on half-board, flying Business Class with Emirates. For terms and conditions visit saga-trade/incentives. You must be 18+ to travel. NHA-AP5587.