

cruise

TRADE NEWS

MAKING WAVES

with Uniworld's
Kathryn Beadle

NEW TO CRUISE

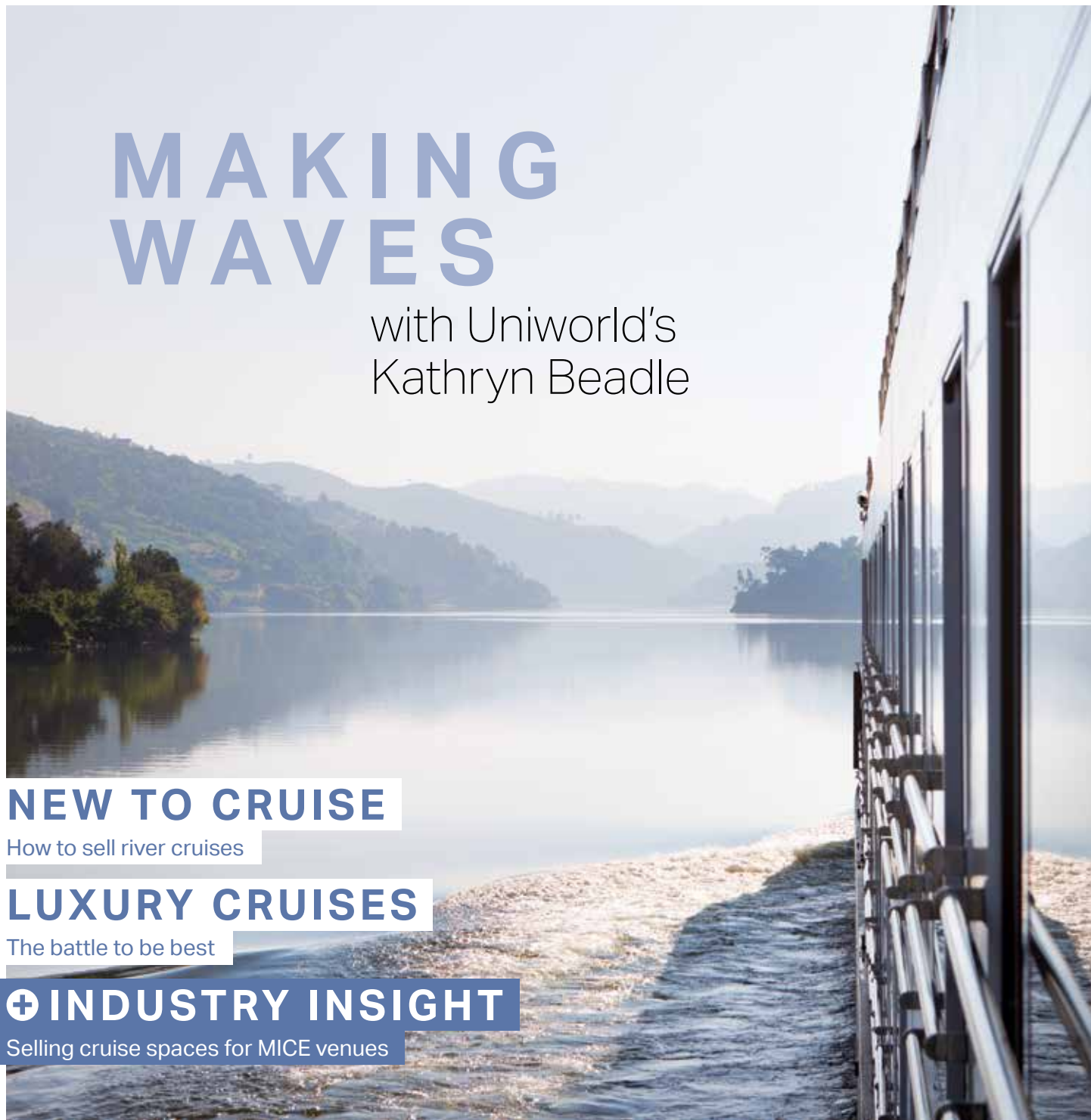
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HELLO AND WELCOME to the relaunch issue of Cruise Trade News, which is full of industry content and comment to keep you up-to-date with the latest cruise happenings and how to sell cruises.

The big news being the recent ship launches, we've got those covered for you throughout the magazine in news, a review, in pictures and a ship visit. It's also the chosen topic of some of our columnists. These events are continuing of course, with the Viking Star being named just as we go to press and looking forward, we await the Norwegian Escape in October. Elsewhere in this issue, we focus on new to cruise clients with a guide to selling river cruises. This is also mentioned in an interview with Uniworld's Kathryn Beadle who urges agents to rethink how to sell river cruises. Beadle also touches on attracting well-heeled customers to the luxury product, and the evolution of this sector is looked at in our dedicated luxury cruises feature. A number of you will be attending the CLIA Selling Cruise Conference in Southampton (May 21-23) and gaining as much knowledge as possible at the event about this exciting and expanding travel sector.

I'm looking forward to visiting the three ships – Britannia, Anthem of the Seas and Royal Princess – as well as seeing many familiar and a few new faces during the event.

We're all looking forward to another successful conference.

I hope you enjoy the read.

JILL SAYLES

Editor

jill.sayles@cruisetradenews.com

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115 Sydney Rd, London, N10 2ND
All Enquires **T** 02084442554

EDITOR Jill Sayles **T** 07769 291608 **E** jill.sayles@cruisetradenews.com **NEWS EDITOR** Jane Archer janearc@aol.com **COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR** Dominic Lawrence-Jones **T** 02084399721 **E** dom.lawrencejones@cruisetradenews.com **SALES & MARKETING DIRECTOR** Peter Grant **T** 07483 133 932 **E** peter.grant@worldofcruisingmagazine.com **DESIGN CONSULTANT** Kate Harkus **E** kate.harkus@realresponsedmedia.com **PUBLISHING CONSULTANT** Keith Ellis **T** 01737 812411 **E** keith.ellis@cruisetradenews.com **MANAGING DIRECTOR** Chris Pitchford **T** 02084442554 **E** chris.pitchford@realresponsedmedia.com **FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS** **T** 02084442554 **E** info@cruisetradenews.com *Reproduction is not permitted without the express written consent of the editor. All efforts are made to ensure that factual accuracy is correct at the time of publication.*



TRAINING PLANS FOR VIKING

...to help sell 2017 itineraries

VIKING OCEAN CRUISES is planning a major training programme to ensure UK agents are in a strong position to sell 2017 itineraries when they are launched.

Speaking during one of the maiden cruises on the company's new ship Viking Star, UK head of sales Neil Barclay said there will be online training, webinars and also day trips to Bergen, Venice and Barcelona so they can see the ship.

He said: "The ship is sold out so we can't actually get them on any cruises but

we hope to take around 60 to look around the ship this year." Viking also trains more than 700 agents a year through the Bright consortium.

Viking Star's maiden season was snapped up when it went on sale two years ago and 2016, when one more ship is launching (and another in 2017), is getting heavily booked.

Barclay expects 2017, which he called a 'big opportunity' for UK agents, to go on sale in the third quarter of this year.

Viking's new ocean cruise company aims to push the focus of ocean cruising back to destination. Barclay said: "It is providing agents with a different product to sell."

The 930-passenger Viking Star is designed in the same Scandinavian style as Viking River Cruises' Longships. Prices include one free excursion per port, drinks with lunch and dinner, drinks taken from the minibar, speciality dining and use of the thermal suite.

DESTINATION FOCUS FOR HOLLAND AMERICA

The new president of Holland America Line has promised to 'protect and enhance' the on board culture while bringing more first-time cruisers to the brand.

Speaking during his first visit to London in his new role, Orlando Ashford said it was important to make the 'pie bigger' without losing the 'strong affection' people have for Holland America.

"We have beautiful ships, but so do other companies. You can steal a design; you can't steal the culture on board. It is precious and a reason why a lot of people return. But we are missing opportunities to promote the value. I had never cruised before I took this role but the industry should have been courting me." Ashford joined the company on December 1 last year



ABOVE Havana, Cuba

from US consultation firm Mercer and has since been on two cruises. He is keen to make the many countries and ports that Holland America ships visit a much bigger focus for the company. "I want to attract people who really want to experience destinations.

"We will talk more about the places we visit on board and offer more overnights in port and once-in-a-lifetime experiences. It's what people want."

Ashford said the line is also looking at Cuba now that the country is starting to open up. "The advantage of small ships is we can get to more destinations and take people where they want to go."

The 2,650-passenger ship will be the biggest in the Holland America fleet when it launches in April 2016.

930

Number of passengers on Viking Ocean Cruises' Viking Star

42

The number of nights on Saga Cruises' Grand Caribbean Adventure visiting Cuba

CUBA CRUISES EXPANDED DUE TO DEMAND

CRUISE LINES ARE expanding their Cuba cruises beyond a day or two in Havana to meet growing demand for the Caribbean island following the recent thaw in relations with the US.

Thomson Cruises has a one-off Cuban Revolution voyage on Thomson Dream from Montego Bay in Jamaica next January from £1,012 per person including flights. The cruise visits Santiago de Cuba, the island's second-largest city, and Holguin in the north-east as well as including an overnight stay in Havana.

It is in addition to six Cuban Fusion cruises, also from Montego Bay on Dream, that spend two days in Havana, with optional excursions to author Ernest Hemingway's home, now a museum, and the Tropicana cabaret.

Hapag-Lloyd Cruises' Europa 2 is visiting Cuba for the first time on a 13-day voyage from La Guaira in Venezuela to Havana in October next year, while Saga Cruises' Saga Pearl II is calling at Santiago de Cuba and Havana on a 42-night Grand Caribbean Adventure from Southampton next November.

Cosmos Tours and Cruises has a 12-day Cuban Explorer itinerary comprising a seven-night voyage around the island on Celestyal Cristal and three nights bed-and-breakfast in Havana from £1,399 per person departing January 4 2016 including flights, transfers and a Cuban tourist card.

Star Clippers' cruises round-trip from Cienfuegos visit Trinidad and the Cayman Islands; Variety Cruises has one-week cruises between Cienfuegos and Havana that visit Trinidad and a turtle breeding centre in Cayo Largo.



HURTIGRUTEN'S LIGHT SHOW

Hurtigruten is so sure passengers will see the Northern Lights on its 12-night voyages from Bergen to Kirkenes and back this winter that it has promised a free seven-night cruise (to be taken winter 2016/17) to anyone if they don't appear. It is also giving away free flights from Heathrow or Gatwick and wine or beer with dinner to clients booking a Classic Round Voyage departing between October and December 2015.



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\$300m

The cost of Royal Caribbean International's fleet revitalisation programme.



BRITS NEED 'CONVINCING' TO TAKE CRUISES

CONVINCING THE 20 million Britons who are 'indifferent' to cruising to spend their holiday on a ship is the biggest challenge facing the industry, according to Royal Caribbean International's UK boss.

Speaking on a two-day cruise from Southampton on the new 4,180-passenger Anthem of the Seas, UK managing director Stuart Leven called on the industry to sell the concept of a cruise before focusing on brands.

He said: "We have amazing ships but the hardware is not enough. We have a job to do convincing people to cruise. The message needs to be first the experience, then the brand. The market struggled to come out of recession and is still selling on price, not value."

Leven said Royal Caribbean is dropping last-minute discounts and instead will reward early bookers with benefits such as free drinks packages and gratuities.

As eight out of 10 Royal Caribbean bookings come through the trade he is also putting more focus on agent education. The UK sales team has doubled from four to eight this year so they can make more regular calls on the trade.

A new loyalty scheme for agents who have achieved Admiral status in the company's training programme rewards bookings with cash.

Anthem of the Seas was named in Southampton last month by godmother Emma Wilby, a Thomson travel agent from Scotland. It is sailing from Southampton until October, when it relocates to New Jersey.

EXPLORER HAS MAKEOVER

Inside cabins with virtual balconies, a surf simulator and outdoor movie screen have been added to Royal Caribbean International's Explorer of the Seas during a five-week makeover in Cadiz.

Also new on the ship, which is sailing from Southampton this summer, are 24 panoramic cabins, including two family rooms that each sleep up to six people, a sports bar and three speciality restaurants - Chops Grill steakhouse, Italian Giovanni's Table and Japanese Izumi.

Digital boards have been installed to help passengers find their way around the ship, flatscreen TVs have been added to all cabins and public areas have been refreshed.

UK managing director Stuart Leven said the refurbishment was part of a \$300 million fleet revitalisation programme. "To all intents and purposes, this is a new ship sailing for the British market this year."



Photo: Stefan Venter.

175 NOT OUT!

Cunard's three Queens sailed out of Southampton at the end of a day in port that kicked off the company's 175th anniversary celebrations. Once in the English Channel, Queen Mary 2, Queen Elizabeth and Queen Victoria headed off on their respective cruises to New York, Guernsey and Germany. They will next meet on the Mersey in Liverpool on May 25.

NORWEGIAN DROPS ASIAN RESTAURANT CHARGES

NORWEGIAN CRUISE LINE has removed the cover charge and à la carte pricing from all the Asian restaurants across its fleet.

Norwegian has 10 Chinese restaurants across 10 ships, ranging from noodle bars on Breakaway and Getaway to Shanghai's Chinese restaurant on Norwegian Epic.

There is still a cover charge to dine in Norwegian's Japanese Teppanyaki restaurants and Sushi bars.

Starting January 2016, Norwegian is also including the cost of alcoholic and soft drinks up to the value of \$11 in the cost of all Norwegian Sky cruises. The ship sails three and four-night cruises round-trip from Miami to the Bahamas year-round.

Conversely, Norwegian has rolled out a \$7.95 charge for room service trialled on Norwegian Breakaway and Getaway across its fleet. Morning coffee and continental breakfast continue to be served complimentary and the fee is waived for passengers in suites or the Haven's gated accommodation.

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Types of cabin on Voyages of Discovery's Voyager, reduced from 20

MSC RELAUNCHES MIAMI CRUISES

MSC Cruises is to relaunch a programme of year-round cruises from Miami one year after a short-lived attempt to break into the American market.

MSC Divina was set to sail year-round from Miami starting November 2013 but was redeployed back to the Mediterranean in May 2015. It will now resume year-round cruising from the Florida port in summer 2016, and be joined by a second ship, MSC Seaside in November 2017.

The 4,140-passenger MSC Seaside, which will have an aquapark, is one of four new-generation ships due for delivery over the next four years.

As well as a second Seaside-class ship due for delivery in May 2018, MSC is building two new Vista-class ships. MSC Meraviglia is due for delivery in May 2017, with an as-yet unnamed sister vessel for 2019.

MSC Divina's summer 2016 Mediterranean cruises will now be operated by MSC Fantasia and MSC Musica will be replacing MSC Fantasia's previously scheduled cruises in the Baltic and Norwegian fjords.

VOD HALVES CABIN CATEGORIES

CLIENTS WILL FIND choosing a cabin on Voyages of Discovery's Voyager much easier from November when the number of categories is almost halved.

Instead of 20 now, there will be just 11 to choose from, ranging from inside cabins to large suites.

At the same time, Voyages of Discovery is upgrading the top suite amenities to include butler service, premium toiletries, DVD players and complimentary mineral water.

There is also a selection of extras clients can buy into, including a drinks package from £20 per person per day to a massage, manicure and haircut and blow dry from £150 per person.

Voyager, which took centre-stage during Clia UK & Ireland's expedition and small ship expo for agents in Portsmouth in May, had a mini makeover in April that updated the furnishings in Scott's Lounge. There is also a new walkway to the forward Lookout Lounge so passengers can reach the venue without disturbing lectures in the Discovery Lounge.

NEW NO-FLY HIGHLIGHTS FOR SWAN IN 2016

A VOYAGE ALONG three French rivers and whale-watching in Iceland are among highlights of an extended programme of no-fly cruises from Swan Hellenic next year.

All Leisure director of planning and product Lynn Cornish said there are seven ex-UK cruises and most are new itineraries linked to special events.

There is an excursion from Greenwich to the Chelsea Flower Show on a garden-themed cruise in May and the line will be in Edinburgh for the Military Tattoo on a 14-day cruise around the UK in August. On a cruise to the Iberian peninsula in July, passengers will see vessels taking part in the Tall Ships Festival in both Lisbon and Cadiz.

A new 30-day no-fly voyage to the Solovetsky Islands in the Russian White Sea in June can be split into two shorter cruises for clients who don't mind flying: One leg will take them from Portsmouth to Kirkenes in Norway, the other from Kirkenes to the White Sea and back to the UK.

New this year, Swan Hellenic has eight cabins for single occupancy at no supplement. The cabins were used for guest entertainers in the past, but are no longer needed as the company has taken on a group of in-house musicians.



WHERE THE OCEANS MEET THE RIVERS

River cruising is becoming so popular that ocean companies are getting in on the act. Fred Olsen Cruise Lines has a 14-night voyage departing July 16 2016 that sails the Guadalquivir to Seville, the Gironde and Garonne to Bordeaux and the Seine to Rouen. The cruise, sailing round-trip from Southampton, is on Braemar, which will be staying overnight in each city and also visiting Lisbon and Alivés in Spain. From £1,599 per person cruise-only.

1,830 Passenger capacity on Thomson Cruises' renamed ship Thomson Discovery

THOMSON CRUISES ADDS A SHIP

ROYAL CARIBBEAN INTERNATIONAL'S Splendour of the Seas will be renamed Thomson Discovery when it joins Thomson Cruises in summer 2016.

The vessel, which leaves Royal Caribbean after a final sailing on April 4 2016, will be the largest in Thomson's fleet with capacity for 1,830 passengers.

It will also be Thomson's most modern ship, with more balconies than any of its other ships, as well as features including an outdoor movie screen, rock-climbing wall and three speciality restaurants.

It will be sailing four seven-night itineraries from Palma de Mallorca alongside Thomson Majesty, which is offering new late-evening departures from Ibiza and Barcelona on its Catalan Promise itinerary.

Next summer, Thomson Spirit is sailing four itineraries from the new homeport of Malaga, while Thomson Celebration continues to offer adult-only cruises from Dubrovnik on itineraries that have been tweaked to include an overnight in the city. Thomson Dream will be sailing the Greek Isles from Corfu.

Thomson's sister brand Island Cruises will cease to exist at the end of this summer, with the last cruise on Island Escape scheduled for October 20 2015.

The ship will feature an outdoor movie screen and three speciality restaurants.



HEBRIDEAN'S PRINCESS RETURNS

Hebridean Island Cruises' 50-passenger ship Hebridean Princess has returned to service after its winter break with a new card room and refurbished Treet Lounge (pictured). Its new 2016 programme has been launched featuring cruises to the Orkney and Shetland Islands and a themed Flavours of Scotland voyage that visits three Michelin-starred restaurants. Luxury feature, page 46.

IT'S ALL **CLIA**



WITH ANDY HARMER
director, CLIA UK & Ireland

This month we will welcome a record number of travel agents, sponsors and cruise line partners to our ninth annual Selling Cruise Conference in Southampton. From new destinations to on board activities, 2015 is already proving to be a great year to sell cruise holidays, particularly as there are seven new ocean ships and more than 25 river vessels being launched.

Of these, three fantastic ships will be in port for the conference; P&O Cruises' new 141,000-ton modern classic Britannia, Royal Caribbean's recently launched ultra-hi-tech Anthem of the Seas, and Princess Cruises' Royal Princess, christened by Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cambridge. Even more excitingly, we will see all three sailing from Southampton over the summer.

The three day Selling Cruise conference will give agents the chance to tour and dine on these ships – with time to explore the ships' public spaces and where possible some of the bedrooms too. Each ship will host one of our three part Conference Sessions where we aim to give agents the insights, ideas and inspiration to sell more ocean and river cruises.

This year cruise ships are continuing to innovate in areas such as technology, dining, entertainment and design, surprising and delighting passengers across the globe. For example, I'm sure that ten years ago, none of us would have imagined having the opportunity to skydive in an iFly® simulator on the deck of a cruise ship or to enjoy cuisine carefully selected by celebrity chefs Jamie Oliver, James Martin or Marco Pierre White for British consumers.

CLIA works with over 60 cruise lines, and each brings their own individuality, whether in areas such as entertainment, relaxation and dining options, or in the destinations they offer. We're now seeing itineraries that take passengers off the beaten track for hands-on experiences across a range of unusual destinations.

Cruise passengers have a great choice of UK ports from which to begin their holiday, giving greater choice and flexibility.

There are plenty of new ships joining the worldwide fleet in the next few years that will further demonstrate what an exciting industry we work in. This autumn sees the arrival of Norwegian Escape, featuring the largest aqua park at sea and in 2016, Carnival Vista is being launched with its innovative family facilities, to name but two.

With such a dynamic and innovative year ahead for the industry, this year's conference is set to showcase why 2015 is certainly the year to sell cruise. ⚓

River news



CROISIEUROPE TO EXPAND FLEET

...new hotel barges, a river cruise boat and a paddlewheel to be added

FRENCH RIVER CRUISE giant CroisiEurope is expanding its hotel barge fleet next year with the addition of two 24-passenger vessels to sail in Burgundy and along the Garonne Canal.

The Daniele will cruise the Briare Canal between Burgundy and the Loire Valley, while the Deborah will sail between Toulouse and Damazan in Aquitaine, south-west France.

Also new for 2016, the company is launching a 60-passenger river cruise boat to sail the Mekong between Siem Reap

in Cambodia and Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam.

CroisiEurope is also building a paddlewheel to sail between Berlin and Prague. The 80-passenger Elbe Princesse, which launches spring 2016, has been designed to operate on the shallow waters of the Elbe and Vltava Rivers.

The nine-day voyage includes two nights docked in Prague and two nights in Berlin, as well as visits to Litomerice, Dresden, Meissen, Wittenberg and Magdeburg. Prices start from £1,396

per person cruise-only in April 24 2016 including alcoholic and soft drinks.

The Elbe Princesse has been modelled on the Loire Princesse, pictured, which launched in April and was designed with two side-mounted paddlewheels so it can navigate the shallow water of the Loire.

The vessel sails alternate six or eight-day cruises round-trip from Nantes with optional excursions including tours of Angers, the medieval city of Guérande and some of the most famous chateaux in the Loire Valley.

AMADEUS RIVER CRUISES UPGRADES PRODUCT

Amadeus River Cruises is upgrading its product next year to offer free drinks with lunch as well as dinner.

At the same time, the company is launching a new vessel, Amadeus Silver III, a sister to the Silver II, which was christened in Holland in April.

The craft holds 168 passengers, which is 22 fewer than Amadeus Silver, a sister vessel that launched in 2013. Reducing numbers has allowed the



company to increase the size of its 12 suites from 24 square metres to 26.4 square metres.

All have full balconies, while the other cabins have either French windows or a fixed window. The vessel also has a café, a spa and a hair salon.

Amadeus Silver II is sailing various itineraries on the Rhine and Danube. An eight-day Classical Danube cruise from Passau to Budapest or vice-versa costs from £1,369 per person cruise-only departing July 9.

50% Discount given by Uniworld for each child aged four to 18 years old travelling with one adult



OPERATORS EYE UP THE FAMILY MARKET

TAUCK AND UNIWORLD are expanding their family cruise programmes in 2016 in a bid to encourage younger people to try a river cruise.

Tauck is offering 10 family cruises in 2016, up from eight this year, with sailings on the Rhône, Rhine and Danube, while Uniworld said it will have twice as many family-friendly cruises in 2016. This year there are three departures on the Danube and Seine.

Each has special activities for children such as scavenger hunts, medieval games and cookery classes. Tauck charges children the adult price (the minimum recommended age is eight), Uniworld gives a 50% discount for each child aged four to 18 years old travelling with one adult.

Germany's A-Rosa is also on a family offensive by offering free cruises on all routes for children aged 15 and under this year. It means a family of four can book two cabins for the price of one.

While A-Rosa doesn't have family departures, its international vessels carry bikes and all bar one have a top-deck swimming pool.

AmaWaterways hopes to attract families after installing connecting cabins on AmaVista and AmaSerena. Both launched this spring and have heated pools and bikes that will appeal to children.

The company has also struck a deal with Disney to offer family-focused cruises on the Danube next year. There are just five departures initially, on a custom-built vessel with cabins for up to five people and family-friendly excursions.

SERENITY HAS MINI MAKEOVER

The **River Cruise** Line has given the 190-passenger Serenity a mini makeover to make it more Brit-friendly after committing to a long-term charter of the vessel.

The company, which sells almost 100% to the UK market, took allocation on Serenity for a few cruises last year but has now signed a whole-ship charter for at least five years. As a result, it has installed a tea-and-coffee machine in the aft bar where clients can get unlimited free beverages and tailored menus to suit British tastes.

A preview brochure featuring Serenity's 2016 programme includes a four-night tulip-time mini-break, a new seven-night cruise around Holland and Belgium and a 12-day voyage from Passau to Cologne. There are also more Danube cruises round-trip from Passau as the 2015 dates sold out very fast.

A seven-night cruise-and-stay holiday trialled this year to attract newcomers to the market is being repeated. It combines four nights on the Danube with three nights in Budapest and costs from £749 including travel by coach and ferry.

The company's full 2016 brochure, also featuring cruises on the Lady Anne, will be out at the end of May.



EAU DE COLOGNE

Australia's APT has taken delivery of a third vessel for its four-star Travelmarvel river cruise brand. Travelmarvel Sapphire, formerly the Avalon Tapestry, was renamed during a gala ceremony in Cologne, Germany, by godmother Nicole De Wilde, APT's vice-president sales and marketing North America, UK and Europe. The vessel will be sailing 15-day European Gems cruises between Amsterdam and Budapest.

Join the Party

2016 VIKING
RIVER CRUISES
ON SALE NOW



win
one of 50
cocktail
sets

↓

Email agents2@vikingcruises.com
with your 2016 booking reference
by 30 June 2015 to be entered
into the draw

The perfect mix

Ingredients

- * One award-winning Viking river cruise
- * Prices from £895pp
- * Savings of £1,000pp if booked by 30 June 2015
- * No regional flight supplements from up to 14 UK airports

Directions

Mix these ingredients together and shake well to create great commission earnings and happy customers

Order your 2016 river cruise brochure and 'Your Complete Guide to River Cruising' on trade-gate.co.uk or call 020 8780 7985 now for reservations

9

The number of ships in Tauck's river fleet. An expansion of 125% in two years.

TAUCK HAS LOFTY AMBITIONS

Grace and Joy, the two new river cruise boats being launched next year by Tauck, will feature the unique Loft cabins that debuted on the company's Inspire and Savor, which entered service in 2014. The rooms have a raised seating area and deep window to let in more light and give passengers in the lower-deck cabins a view. The duo, each of which has capacity for 130 passengers, will take Tauck's river fleet to nine – a 125% expansion in just two years. Grace will be sailing a new 10-day cruise that combines two nights in Bern, Switzerland, with a Rhine cruise from Basel to Amsterdam.



AVALON
WATERWAYS®

Save up to £1400* per couple on 2016 European River Cruises with more included

Earn £25 worth of Love2shop per person booked†

Book by 30 June 2015 and save up to £1400* per couple on Avalon Waterways' luxury European river cruises in 2016.

An Avalon cruise offers a private chauffeur-driven home pick-up service, exceptional levels of on-board service, à la carte dining, full board deluxe cruising, guided sightseeing and gratuities all included in the price.



Largest staterooms on Europe's rivers



Private chauffeur service† to and from the airport



Youngest fleet in Europe - average ship age just 3 years

To find out more call 0800 440 2672

or contact agencysales@avaloncruises.co.uk

ABTA
ABTA No. V3031



We are a member of ABTA & all our flight inclusive holidays are protected by the ATOL scheme. *Savings of up to £1400 are available on Avalon's 2016 North Sea to the Black Sea departures when booked by 30 June 2015. Earn £25 Love2shop vouchers on every passenger booked before 30 June 2015 (maximum vouchers £200 per booking). † Avalon private chauffeur driven service is included if you live within 100 miles of your departure point, if you live further than 100 miles away you can still take advantage of this service by paying the excess mileage at £1.70 per mile. All offers are subject to availability and may be withdrawn at any time, correct at time of send (15 May 2015).

30% of The River Cruise Line's sales are made through the trade

£1,119 Starting price of Saga's eight night spa-cum-cruise holidays

COMPANY PLEDGES NO MORE LATE DEALS

THE RIVER CRUISE Line has launched its 2016 brochure with a promise to stop last-minute discounting and is instead offering a 10% early-booking incentive that clients can put against excursions or drinks packages on board.

Sales and business development manager Tim Fleming said he wants to protect its brand, avoid alienating passengers and prevent river cruising descending into a discount model.

He said: "There will be no discounting next year. If we need to fill last-minute capacity we will instead add value, for instance an upgrade from coach to rail travel or airport lounges."

Fleming said agents get the same rates as the company's direct business so clients pay the same whichever channel they book through. However, group organisers can get net rates provided they are used in a package that is different to any River Cruise Line itinerary and is sold under their own name.

Some 60% of the company's sales are direct, with 30% through the trade and the rest from group business. Fleming is focusing on key cruise agents to help build that side of the business, and also looking at ways to lower the average age from 65 to 55 after committing to a long-term charter of the river boat Serenity.

He said: "We are looking at city sightseeing, bike tours and hiking excursions. River cruising is a fantastic product for all ages. It is all about history and culture but you can learn as much or as little as you want."

"There will be no discounting next year."

TIM FLEMING
sales and business
development manager,
The River Cruise Line



AN UPLIFTING EXPERIENCE

Clients can experience the only boat lift in Continental Europe on six-night canal cruises through France between Strasbourg and Niderviller on European Waterways' 12-passenger hotel barge Panache. The cruises, priced from £2,650 per person cruise-only, operate from July to October with highlights including private wine tastings, a visit to the Lalique museum and a tour of Strasbourg.



SCENIC GOES UPMARKET

Scenic has dropped the 'Tours' part of its name to move the brand more upmarket.

The Australian company has adopted a gold on black logo for the new look, which uses the strapline 'Luxury Cruises and Tours' to give more focus on the river cruise side of the business.

UK brand manager Nichola Absalom said: "Scenic is growing globally so this was the right time to introduce a modern new look. Scenic Tours didn't say cruises, but river cruising is where our focus is and where our future lies."

The company has just launched two new river cruise boats in Europe – Scenic Jasper and Opal – and will add the Scenic Amber in 2016. Next year the company is also offering cruises on the Douro in Portugal for the first time on the new Scenic Azure.

It is also moving into Asia, offering seven-night all-inclusive cruises on the Mekong on the new 68-passenger Scenic Spirit sandwiched between city stays in Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam and Siem Reap in Cambodia.

NEW SAGA RIVER ITINERARIES

TWO SIX-NIGHT voyages on the Danube from Budapest to Linz that start with two nights in a health spa in the Hungarian capital are among a quartet of new river cruise itineraries from over-50s specialist Saga next year.

Other options include a six-night cruise from Amsterdam to Brussels on May 5 that visits Middleburg, Ghent and Antwerp, with prices from £799 per person including coach travel.

A nine-night cruise through Hungary, Croatia and Serbia on April 13 follows in the footsteps of the Ottomans, with highlights including a transit of the Iron Gates Gorge.

The spa-cum-cruise holidays depart April 20 and July 17 and cost from £1,199 per person for eight nights including flights.

Titan Ocean Cruise Offers

Vancouver to Vegas

a voyage along America's
iconic west coast



**5 nights in hotels
and 5 nights on the
Norwegian Jewel**

**Now £1999^{PP}
Save £300^{PP}**

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Not in brochure - for more
details see titanagents.co.uk

New York & a Southern Caribbean Cruise

including 2 nights in New York



**12 nights on the
Norwegian Breakaway**

**Now £2149^{PP}
Save £150^{PP}**

Plus free balcony upgrade
when booking OA grade
subject to availability
15th & 29th January 2016
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details see titanagents.co.uk

Alaskan cruise with Rockies by rail

including Banff, Vancouver and Seattle



**Cruise & Tour
8 nights in hotels
and 7 nights cruise**

**Now £3599^{PP}
Save £150^{PP}**

16th August 2015
See pages 18-19 of the
Cruise brochure

Treasured Islands

Key Largo and a Southern
Caribbean Cruise



**3 nights in hotels
and 11 nights on
the MS Oosterdam**

**Now £2399^{PP}
Save £200^{PP}**

13th November 2015
Not in brochure - for more
details see titanagents.co.uk



**Titan's 2015 Ocean & River Cruise Compendium
brochure, featuring over 150 ocean and river cruise holidays
in one trade friendly brochure.**

Every ocean and river cruise with Titan includes

- VIP door to door transfers*
- Scheduled flights and resort transfers
- Titan tour manager throughout
- Free regional flights for customers in Northern England, Scotland & N.Ireland



For more details on all offers with downloadable flyers visit www.titanagents.co.uk

Ocean and River Cruising with Titan

Titan River Cruise Offers

Cruise the Beautiful Wachau Valley

with time in three capital cities



**8 nights river cruise
on the Royal Crown**

Now £1599^{PP}

Save £100^{PP}

7th August 2015

See pages 142-143 of the
Cruise brochure

Historic Cities along the Danube

including two nights in picturesque Prague



**7 nights cruise on
the Royal Crown and
2 nights in Prague**

Now £1699^{PP}

Save £150^{PP}

22nd July 2015

See page 146-147 of the
Cruise brochure

Historic Portugal and the Douro

with a cruise aboard the 'Royal Barge'



**3 nights cruise on
the 'Royal Barge' and
4 nights in Pousadas**

Now £1729^{PP}

Save £150^{PP}

1st July 2015

See page 164 of the
Cruise brochure

Stunning Salzburg and the Danube

Sailing from Passau to beautiful Budapest



**7 nights cruise on
the Royal Crown and
2 nights in Salzburg**

Now £1899^{PP}

Save £100^{PP}

22nd July 2015

Not in brochure - for more
details see titanagents.co.uk



*Book in May and
WIN a Mulberry
handbag or an
Apple Watch!*

Visit www.titanagents.co.uk for further details and how to enter

EARN, LEARN, TRY IT OUT

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

SILVERSEA IS OFFERING the chance of winning a Mediterranean cruise for any agent who makes a booking between May 18 and June 7. They will be entered into a draw to win. The more bookings made during this period, the more chances there are to win the voyage on board Silver Spirit in November. During the competition more than 1,500 limited edition chocolate bars will also be distributed to agents across the UK. Six chocolate bars will contain a Silver Ticket which entitles them to a European ship visit during the summer. They are also encouraged to share photos of them receiving their chocolate on social media, using the hashtag #WhereisTheSilverTicket. A bottle of champagne will be awarded for the best picture. Email salesuk@silversea.com for more details.

Cruise Baltic, a network of 10 countries and 27 cruise destinations in the Baltic Sea region, has announced the launch of an e-learning course for travel agents, accessible at cruisebaltictraining.com. The programme includes sales materials and quick facts on attractions and shore excursions for each destination. After completing the course online, agents will receive a personalized diploma, certifying them as a Baltic Cruise expert. To celebrate the launch, the company is giving away an iPad mini to one of the first 50 travel agents to register and complete the course. The

winner will be drawn on June 1. By joining the platform, travel agents will have access to five training modules including: Cruise Baltic Countries, Baltic Destinations, Unique Selling Points, Baltic Highlights, Baltic Products (details on hotel and airline partners: Scandic and SAS). Visit cruisebaltictraining.com

VOYAGES TO ANTIQUITY is developing an online agent training platform, which will be available on <http://travelagents.voyagestoantiquity.com> this June. Agents will learn about Voyages to Antiquity's unique cruise product through video, imagery and written content. They will then be able to test their knowledge and, if successful, become Luminary Agents for Voyages to Antiquity, with access to exclusive offers and benefits. The platform will also provide news on new destinations, exclusive offers materials and advice on selling techniques.

Celebrity Cruises launched its 2016-17 Luxury Cruises Worldwide brochure in March featuring itineraries including a commemorative sailing marking 400 years since the death of William Shakespeare and new ports of call with Celebrity Constellation based in Abu Dhabi for the first time. Agents received a trade specific booklet detailing top selling tips and advice on topics such as reasons to book, key Suite Class and

Aqua Class stateroom features, what's new for 2016/17 and details on the Celebrity Rewards incentive scheme. For more information visit www.cruisingpower.co.uk.

ROYAL CARIBBEAN INTERNATIONAL, Celebrity Cruises and Azamara Club Cruises will soon begin training travel agents on a new intuitive technology platform called Espresso. The dedicated training module on Espresso has been added to the Cruising for Excellence e-learning programme at cruisingpower.co.uk. Agents will be visited by sales staff and also be able to listen to a vodcast found in 'CFE TV' – part of Cruising for Excellence online - to learn more about the new platform and increase earnings. Training started in April, ahead of the new technology platform taking over from the existing CruiseMatch system in June this year. As part of the training phase, travel agents who attended the launch of Anthem of the Seas in April had a preview of Espresso. Agents who complete the module have the chance to win Starbucks vouchers. The platform aims to make bookings simpler, allow clear comparison of different sailings and accommodation options, and ensure that the best available offers are always highlighted. Agents should use the existing CruiseMatch booking tool until they have completed the Espresso training. For more information and to sign up go to www.cruisingpower.co.uk.



Crystal Cruises has announced an incentive for 2015 cruises booked between April 16 and May 31. Agents will earn a £50 Red Letter Day lifestyle voucher which can be used in stores and restaurants including John Lewis, Starbucks, Marks & Spencer, Oasis, B&Q and Pizza Express. In addition, every booking made during this period will be entered in to a draw to win a place on a Crystal Cruises' fam trip which will take place later in the year. For more information visit www.discovercrystal.co.uk



Azamara Club Cruises has announced a deal with Royal Caribbean International to partner with its recently launched loyalty scheme, Club Royal. Since April 1, Azamara's travel partners have been able to use the programme's rewards for bookings. For every Azamara booking made, (including netts) agents will receive a £10 credit loaded onto a prepaid Mastercard® for immediate use. Agents can sign up for the programme at www.MyClubRoyal.co.uk where they need to be a Royal Caribbean 'Captain' on the e-learning programme,

Cruising for Excellence. Once registered, agents will receive their Mastercard® within 28 days. Additional membership benefits are discounts off Red Letter Days, as well as bonuses for bookings and £100 added to their Mastercard® if they book an Azamara or Royal Caribbean cruise for their personal holiday. The company will also host select members at two 'Loyalty Events' this year. For more information visit

www.cruisingpower.co.uk and to join the club visit www.MyClubRoyal.co.uk

Agents can enter Titan's May Madness competition for bookings made from May 1 to 31, to win a Mulberry Tessie Tote handbag or an Apple Watch Sport. The offer is valid for all Titan tours, ocean or river cruises and all Uniworld river cruises on any departure date. Winners will be picked at random and notified by June 5. To enter email the booking reference to either handbag@titantravel.co.uk or watch@titantravel.co.uk before 5pm on June 1.

TRAINING AND SHIP visits are available on request with The River Cruise Line which has recently launched a 2016 preview brochure, with 2016 departures of cruises aboard the MS Serenity at 2015 prices. Early booking offers are also available including half price excursion and drinks packages on selected cruises. In addition, many departures for 2015 have no single supplement offers on any cabin grades. Online booking is available for agents at

www.rivercruiseline.co.uk. Agents should register their interest for training and ship visits by calling **0844 544 6580**.

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines has released details of its 2015 ship visit programme for the UK travel trade, which is free for agency staff. Agents will learn more about the 'Fred. Olsen Difference' and discover how the cruise line gets 'closer to the destination'.

There is also the chance to receive one-to-one product training and sales tips from senior members of the sales team, as well as presentations and tours.

The onboard training dates this year are: Braemar on Tuesday, June 2 in Dover; Balmoral on Tuesday, June 9 in Southampton; Boudicca on Sunday, June 21 in Rosyth, Edinburgh; Black Watch, on Friday, June 26 in Liverpool.

The visits run from 9.30am – 1.30pm. Up to four places can be booked per agency branch and to register

go to www.fredolsencruises.com/TravelAgentCentre, call **01473 746 164** or email cruise.sales@fredolsen.co.uk.

CRUISE & MARITIME VOYAGES is offering Magellan, Marco Polo, Azores and Astor ship visits. They are as follows: Astor on June 2 in Harwich; Azores on June 15 in Hull; Marco Polo on June 18 in Newcastle Tyne; Magellan on June 19 in London Tilbury; Marco Polo on June 24 in Edinburgh Leith; Magellan on July 27 in London Tilbury; Astor on July 30 in Liverpool; Astor on August 4 in Rosyth; Magellan on September 3 in London Tilbury; Azores on September 8 in Bristol Avonmouth; Magellan on September 25 in London Tilbury; Magellan on October 23 in London Tilbury. The closing date for registrations is 10 days prior to each visit. To register email agents@cruiseandmaritime.com. For further information call **0844 414 6140**. [Ⓜ](#)

IT'S A DATE



MAY 21-23

CLIA UK & Ireland Selling Cruise Conference

Southampton

Agents can visit three ships – Britannia (pictured), Anthem of the Seas and Royal Princess.

MAY 25

Cunard's Queen Mary 2, Queen Elizabeth and Queen Victoria meet in Liverpool for the first time as part of the company's **175th anniversary celebrations**.

JULY 4

Queen Mary sets sail from Liverpool on Cunard's 175th anniversary crossing.

JULY 7

CLIA UK & Ireland River Cruise Masterclass

London

NEW APPOINTMENTS



Cruisingexcursions.com has announced **Damien Mooney** as managing director. Mooney joins the company with more than 25 years of travel industry experience.



Steven Simao has joined Windstar Cruises as vice president of travel agency sales. Simao will oversee domestic and international sales for Windstar's retail travel agency channel.



Lisa McAuley has joined Silversea as UK commercial director. Changes within the existing sales team have recently been made with the appointment of **Natasha Donovan** as acting head of field sales and **Mafalda Barreto** who has moved to the newly created position of head of expedition sales. **Maarten Tromp** has been appointed director of corporate & incentive sales, EMEA.

WILKINSON'S WORLD



NICK WILKINSON
director business
development,
Norwegian Cruise Line

So much has happened within the cruise industry in the past few months and it doesn't look to be slowing down any time soon.

I hope you have been able to join this year's Selling Cruise Conference in Southampton to learn more about the benefits of selling cruise to your customers.

It is so important, now more so than ever before, that we show cruise really is a legitimate option against land-based holidays and with so many different products on offer, there really is something for everyone.

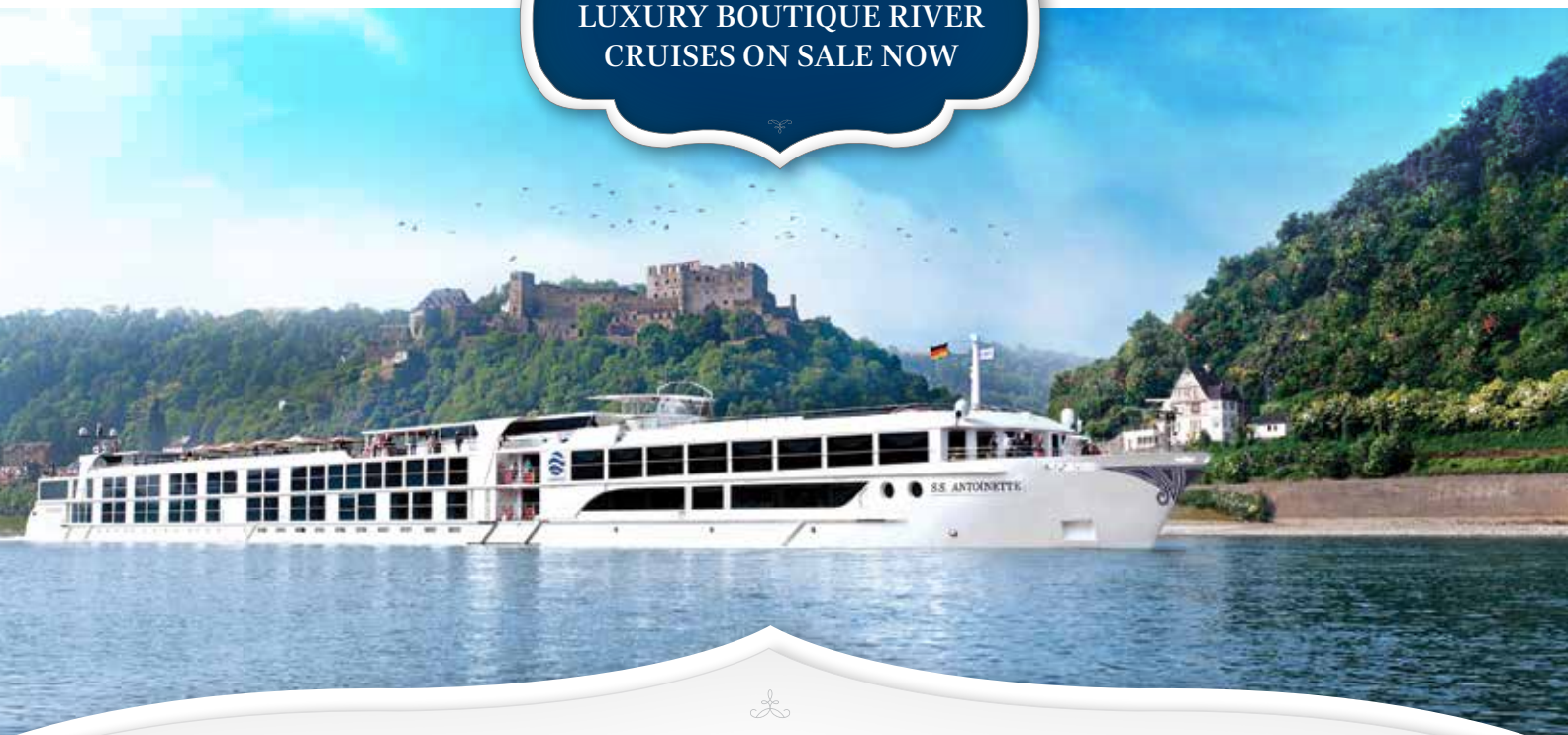
With the summer season nearly upon us, customers can take advantage of a multitude of cruise options; whether booking fly-cruise, cruise-only or cruise and stay there are so many opportunities for you to create a cruise package to suit each individual traveller. With fly-cruise, for instance, there is the prospect of pre- or post-cruise stays, increasing the value proposition so that customers can build their own unique holiday, whilst you can benefit from an increase in revenue. Fly-cruise packages enable guests more freedom, removing the need for sea days and allowing the exploration of exciting faraway destinations like Alaska or South America, something that is a real selling point when highlighting the benefits of a cruise holiday to customers. And, if short haul is preferred, they provide customers with much more time to spend in cultural hubs such as Barcelona or Venice. With so many benefits, what's not to love?

Cruise is a booming industry and we are seeing an abundance of ship launches this year. We have already welcomed Britannia and Anthem of the Seas and our own Norwegian Escape will be introduced to the UK in October. But, it's not all about inaugurals and ship visits, there are many other ways in which we can take cruise to the masses and stand out against land-based holidays. For instance, we have just completed our very first roadshow where we teamed up with key travel partners to showcase Norwegian Epic's entertainment (for more information see page 26) to consumers in key regional flight hubs, and, following its success, we are now planning to replicate it in early 2016. It's time to think outside of the box in order to reach those elusive new-to-cruise customers and there are so many avenues that have yet to be explored. [↓](#)

SEND US YOUR APPOINTMENTS jill.sayles@cruisetradenews.com



2016
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CRUISES ON SALE NOW



Hallmarks of Distinction

- ◆ With decades of hospitality and nautical **expertise**, Uniworld has created the world's only floating luxury boutique hotels.
- ◆ Uniworld provides **impeccable service** and unmatched personal attention, with the highest staff-to-guest ratio in the entire river cruise industry.
- ◆ **Luxurious ships, uniquely designed** to be as one-of-a-kind as our guests and as inspiring as the destinations they visit.
- ◆ Uniworld carefully selects the finest **luxury hotels**, ensuring a seamless experience from onboard to onshore.
- ◆ **Exquisite cuisine** for the most discerning of palates, featuring world-class meals prepared with ingredients sourced from farmers' markets.
- ◆ Uniworld guests enjoy **cultural connections** with onshore and onboard programmes tailored to provide a 360-degree perspective of each destination.

*Discover why the road best travelled is a river,
and why it is best travelled with Uniworld*

Let us fulfil your clients' dreams, as you increase your earning potential. Uniworld offers over 500 departures sailing on 22 rivers in 26 countries throughout Europe, Russia, China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Egypt, and new for 2016, India.

Expertly planned itineraries with custom-designed shore excursions will immerse your clients in history, traditions, and culture.

*Save up to £1,200 per couple**

on a 2016 Uniworld Boutique River Cruise with Early-Booking Savings.

Offer expires 31 July 2015

UNIWORLD
BOUTIQUE RIVER CRUISE COLLECTION®

**To order a copy of the 2016 preview brochure, call
freephone 0808 168 9110, or visit uniworldcruises.co.uk.**



Her Majesty The Queen, accompanied by His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, officially named P&O Cruises' new flagship, Britannia in a ceremony in which a bottle of British Wiston Estate Brut NV was broken against the hull of the 143,000 tons ship. The ceremony was compered by actor, comedian and TV presenter Rob Brydon who features in the company's latest advertising campaign and included the Royal Marines Band Service, the Band of the Irish Guards and English soprano Laura Wright, as well as a Strictly Come Dancing cameo show.



Magellan is the new flagship of the Cruise & Maritime Voyages fleet and will operate as an adult friendly ship. At 46,052grt she will carry about 1250 passengers accommodated in 726 cabins spanning nine passenger decks. Magellan was formerly named at London Tilbury by TV personality Gloria Hunniford in March and blessed by Rev Phil Wright at a special launch ceremony.



CroisiEurope's Loire Princess was christened on the river Loire in April. The ship's godmothers are Ms Johanna Rolland, Mayor of Nantes and Ms Charlotte Britz, Mayor of Sarrebrücken. It is the first vessel to be able to cruise the shallow waters of the Loire thanks to innovative paddlewheel technology. It began cruising last month and will continue until November on six- and eight-day cruises round trip from Nantes visiting Saint-Nazaire, Ancenis, Angers, the Castles of the Loire, Saumur and Bouchemaine.



SHIP LAUNCHES

It's been a busy season of ship launches and christenings that have been celebrated in style with glamorous events and royalty in attendance. Here we have a look at the events in pictures. The tradition of ship christenings dates back more than 4000 years and the appointed godmother blesses the vessel to protect its passengers and crew.



Royal Caribbean International marked the launch of Anthem of the Seas with a naming ceremony in Southampton. Emma Wilby, a 27-year-old British travel agent was chosen as the godmother and she performed with Welsh choir Only Boys Aloud. Onboard features include first-at-sea skydiving experiences, as well as the North Star, a glass capsule that takes guests more than 300 feet above the ocean for a panoramic view. The ship will sail its inaugural season from Southampton to the Mediterranean this summer.

Scenic Tours launched its eleventh 'Space-Ship' named Scenic Jasper. The godmother is author Kathy Lette and the christening took place on the Danube in Vienna in April. The vessel is 135 metres long and carries 169 guests on three decks in 72 suites and 13 staterooms. It includes two full decks of Balcony Suites and the most spacious Panorama Suites on Europe's waterways. A new feature is the Vitality Pool on the Sun Deck. Scenic Jasper sails the Rhine, Main and Danube.





PICTURED CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT The Magellan; Gregor is pictured on board Magellan with his wife Lisa; Outside guest cabin; Kensington restaurant



Gregor Miller, sales manager at Ramsay World Travel in Dundee, recently visited Cruise & Maritime Voyages' flagship Magellan at the port in Dundee. Here's his feedback.

A TOUR OF MAGELLAN

WHAT WAS THE OCCASION?

It was the first Magellan sailing of three that were to be leaving from the Port of Dundee this year. It is the largest cruise ship to have been in Dundee and by far the most luxurious. Cruise & Maritime Voyages (CMV) very kindly invited us to come along and have a tour around the ship to experience what was on offer.

WHAT DID YOU SEE? WHAT'S ON OFFER?

We boarded the ship around midday and were taken to Sinatra's bar for a very nice champagne reception where the captain Emmanuel Psarrakis introduced himself.

Chris Coates, commercial director at CMV very kindly then took us around the ship and gave us all the chance to see the standard inside cabins, the deluxe balcony suites, the library, the main show lounge and nightclub plus more.

CABINS

There are 726 cabins on board including 14 balcony suites. All types of cabin are very spacious and have all the facilities you

would expect. The balcony suites were excellent and they even had a bottle of champagne awaiting you on your arrival. Inside cabins are more than adequate especially considering these were being sold for around £400 per person for a seven-night cruise to the Norwegian Fjords on full-board basis.

DECKS

There are nine passenger decks with plenty of lifts for those who don't like using the stairs, so no problem getting around. There are maps on each floor to make sure you know where you are on the ship and you don't get lost. The corridors are a lot wider than on other cruise liners of a similar size which gives it a very spacious feeling.

RESTAURANTS

There are two main restaurants, the Kensington and the Waldorf, and one informal buffet restaurant. We had a fantastic five-star meal at the Kensington. The service was impeccable and nothing was too much trouble for the staff.

WELLNESS

There is a wellness and beauty centre offering spas and a wide variety of treatments were available. Unfortunately, we did not manage to experience these first-hand, but the size of the spa is incredible as it is a lot larger than on most ships, very spacious and very modern with a great choice of treatments.

The gym area has a good selection of equipment and there are two swimming pools on board as well as three smaller Jacuzzis. Unfortunately, both of these pools had been emptied due to docking procedures, but I'm sure they would be good fun whilst out at sea.

LIBRARY

There's a generously sized library with plenty of comfy seating available and a wide choice of books to choose from.

WHAT ELSE?

There's a small selection of shops on board as well as a card and bridge room. As far as the evening entertainment goes, there's a casino as well as the fantastic main show lounge which has various types of entertainment on each night. The size of this lounge is astounding considering the size of the ship and there's more than enough seating for each of the two performances that were on each evening.

YOUR IMPRESSIONS

Extremely spacious and a lot more modern than I expected and also fantastic value for money with great facilities on board.

WHO DOES IT SUIT?

Adults of all ages, there are no facilities for children.

SALES MADE

We had more than 600 passengers booked to go over the three sailings that departed from Dundee and we have not had one complaint so I think that speaks for itself. ⚓



Discover the treasures of the World by sea



[1] Ponant Bonus fare based on two people sharing a cabin, excluding pre/post transportation, port & security taxes, flights Buenos Aires/Ushuaia and Ushuaia and Ushuaia and Ushuaia. More information is available at www.ponant.com. Document & photos non contractuel. Photo credit: © PONANT / Nathalie Michal / Elelebyre / Clement Vidal.

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YACHT CRUISES & EXPEDITIONS

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

▲ Just over three years ago, in 2011 I was appointed managing director of Seabourn and Holland America Line's new joint office, based at Carnival House in Southampton alongside our sister Carnival UK brands. I previously ran the Holland America Line and Carnival Cruise Lines UK business based from offices in London. One of the most exciting aspects of my new role was to be able to take on the challenge of increasing our trade distribution and sales for luxury operator Seabourn.

Q WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE CRUISE INDUSTRY?

▲ The buzz, the excitement, and most of all the people! There is such talent, passion and commitment in travel and particularly within the cruise industry. As Chair of CLIA's Executive Committee, I regularly sit around a table with our direct cruise line competitors, since as members of CLIA we all work together in order to promote and grow cruise.

Every year brings new ships, new innovations and new destinations.

Q HOW IS YOUR COMPANY DIFFERENT TO OTHER CRUISE LINES?

▲ Holland America Line and Seabourn are very different brands, but the vision of both is to offer the very highest levels of service and customer satisfaction. Perhaps our biggest differentiation is our destinations. Holland America Line really has ships and itineraries in all seven continents, while Seabourn's 458-guest ships can visit some really out of the way places, as well as many UNESCO designated sites. Have you ever heard of Sir Bani Yas Island in the UAE or Phillip Island in Australia? Well, we are going there.

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

▲ That's an easy one to answer as we have two new ships coming in 2016. MS Koningsdam, a brand new "Pinnacle" class of ship for Holland America Line, will debut in April, cruising in the Med and in Northern Europe, while Seabourn Encore arrives in December 2016. We are currently planning our trade campaigns and creating new sales collateral for agents to use in promoting inaugural programmes.

Q&A

LYNN NARRAWAY

managing director UK & Ireland for Holland America Line & Seabourn



"The challenge for agents is to match the cruise to the client."

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

▲ The UK and worldwide market has changed. The Australians and Germans have discovered cruise, and British guests are travelling literally to the ends of the earth to see new destinations by cruise. The biggest change has to be in technology – which affects the entire customer (and agent) journey from research to booking. The one thing that hasn't changed though is the personal service that clients want to have from a good travel agent, and new technology means that agents have new communication channels to do this both before and after their cruise.

Q WHAT IS THE TARGET MARKET OF YOUR COMPANY?

▲ A potential Holland America Line customer may (or may not) shop at Waitrose or M&S; drive a BMW or Lexus and enjoy museums, theatre and country house hotels. He or she will be a discerning traveller, looking to see new destinations in an enriching yet comfortable way – however may not yet have taken a cruise.

Seabourn attracts the luxury traveller. People who enjoy exclusive resorts and travel in business class are looking for outstanding service - and of course the personal expertise provided by their travel agent. Agents should tell them about Seabourn's all-inclusive luxury before revealing it's a cruise.

Q WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FACING CRUISE SALES?

▲ The inclusivity of cruise holidays mean that they are already excellent value. We need to move away from price led promotions and discounting - and sell the incredible range of experiences on offer.

Q HOW DOES THE COMPANY WORK WITH THE TRAVEL TRADE?

▲ We are committed to working in partnership with the travel trade. Our sales team have a close relationship with their accounts and are delighted to assist with any training, webinars, marketing and joint consumer events. We are creating more sales tools and collateral for agents than ever before, and enhancing our excellent online training programmes at www.halacademy.co.uk and www.seabournacademy.co.uk which offer some great tips in selling to premium and luxury clients.

Q WHY SHOULD AGENTS SELL CRUISE RATHER THAN A LAND HOLIDAY?

▲ Just compare the value. Very few land based resorts include fine dining and world-class entertainment within the cost of the holiday, not to say up to five destinations in one week - and without the chore of repacking! Some cruise itineraries feature up to three days in one port (with overnights onboard) so travellers can enjoy a value city break within the cruise without paying for accommodation and dining in some of the most desirable places in the world, such as Venice, Hong Kong, Sydney or Barcelona.

Customers may have different priorities when booking a holiday; however there is a cruise out there for every type of traveller and the challenge is for agents to match the right cruise with the right client. A contented customer will be loyal, recommend to friends via word of mouth – and most importantly will bring you future business. Agents need to complete the excellent online training that cruise lines offer so that they can offer sound product knowledge and expertise to their clients when recommending a cruise holiday. ⚓



1



2



3

IT'S EPIC ENTERTAINMENT

NCL headed to three regional flight hubs for first roadshow

Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) recently took the Norwegian Epic entertainment on the road to three regional flight hubs serving potential fly-cruise customers. The 'Norwegians go the extra mile' event called at Manchester, Newcastle and Glasgow and showcased the new entertainment options that will be offered on the ship in her year-round deployment out of Barcelona.

The company teamed up with three travel agencies, The Holiday & Cruise Channel at Manchester Trafford Centre, Hays Travel at Newcastle Metrocentre and Barrhead Travel at Braehead Shopping Centre in Glasgow to give them the opportunity to get in front of potential customers. Throughout the day shoppers watched performances of the three new shows including Broadway dance sensation Burn the Floor, Priscilla Queen Of The Desert – The Musical, and a Beatles Tribute band as part of a partnership with Liverpool's The Cavern Club. Customers had the chance of winning a seven-night Western Mediterranean fly-cruise on board Norwegian Epic. Here are some images from the event. [↕](#)



4



5



6

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

- 1 The Beatles Tribute band.
- 2 Broadway dance sensation Burn the Floor perform for onlookers at the Trafford Centre, Manchester.
- 3 Pictured left to right at the Braehead Shopping Centre in Glasgow are Nigel Rankin from NCL; Sharon Fox, Nicole Heywood, Marie McLellan, Lauren Markand Barry Robertson all from Barrhead Travel; and Peggy Fakhury, Dominique Ware and Laura Montalban from NCL.
- 4 Louise Hopper from Barrhead Travel (far left) and Laura Montalban from NCL (far right) are pictured with Catherine Adam and Josephine Adam who entered the competition to win a free cruise at the event in Braehead.
- 5 The Norwegian Cruise Line team at the Trafford Centre Epic roadshow in Manchester.
- 6 The Barrhead Travel Team at the Braehead Centre Epic roadshow in Glasgow.



DINING

Dynamic dining options and a choice of 18 restaurant concepts.

- 6 Main dining options
- 6 Signature restaurants
- 8 Informal dining options



OTHER AMENITIES

- Flowrider surf simulator
- Rock-climbing wall
- Outdoor movie screen
- Casino royale
- Royal theatre - home to the ship's two main shows, We Will Rock You and The Gift.
- Adventure ocean youth area
- Video arcade
- Vitality at sea spa and fitness centre
- Bolero's
- Schooner bar
- Sports court
- Concierge club
- Conference room
- Medical centre



POOLS

- 2 Outdoor pools
- 2 Indoor pools
- 4 Whirlpools



FIRST AT SEA ACTIVITIES

Ripcord By iFLY

The first skydiving experience at sea.

North Star

A glass capsule rises 300 feet above sea level offering 360 degree views.

Bionic Bar

Where robots mix the cocktails.



AT A GLANCE...

ANTHEM OF THE SEAS

Anthem of the Seas, the newest ship from Royal Caribbean International, made its maiden voyage on April 22 this year. The ship offers first-at-sea experiences and game-changing technology with futuristic entertainment and a variety of culinary experiences. With so much to discover on the ship, here's a guide at a glance in facts, figures and pictures.



ENTERTAINMENT & ACTIVITY VENUES

Two70

At this venue, the combination of live performers and technology offer multidimensional shows and 270 degree panoramic sea views.

Seaplex

The largest indoor active space at sea including bumper cars, a circus school, roller skating.

Music Hall

A live music venue at sea.



CABINS

Staterooms	2,090
Balcony	1,571
Outside	148
Virtual Balcony - offering real-time views	375
Family Connected	16
Studio with Balcony	12
Wheelchair Accessible	34



5 RETAIL OUTLETS

- Armani
- Bobbi Brown
- Tom Ford
- Bvlgari
- Hublot



FAST FACTS

Length.....	1141 feet
Width.....	136 feet
GRT.....	168,666
Crew.....	1,500
Guests.....	4,905
Total Decks.....	18
Guest Decks.....	16

PADDLE THROUGH FRANCE

Jeannine Williamson reviews the CroisiEurope Loire Princesse



This April, French-owned CroisiEurope made a splash by launching a new ship incorporating paddlewheel technology and becoming the first river cruise line offering overnight cruises on the River Loire. Founded in 1976, the company is one of the pioneers of river cruising and has 43 ships in its fleet.

Until now, only day trips have been available on the Loire as it has very shallow waters during the dry season. The Loire Princesse has been designed with a paddlewheel on each side that allows it to navigate the river year-round. The 96-passenger vessel sails from Nantes on five and seven-night itineraries taking in the beautiful landscapes and chateaux of the Loire Valley.

ACCOMMODATION

All cabins are river-facing, with 30 on the upper deck and 18 on the main deck. The upper deck cabins have floor-to-ceiling sliding picture windows that lead out to

private balconies with a table and two chairs. Main deck cabins have a fixed window. Six cabins on each deck have double beds and in the rest of the cabins there is an optional twin-bed configuration. One cabin has been adapted for disabled passengers.

Each cabin measures 49 square feet, with additional 10ft by 4ft balconies on the upper cabins. They are decorated in a

"CroisiEurope places a lot of emphasis on its French heritage."

bright, contemporary colour scheme and a nice touch is that all beds face the river, enabling passengers to enjoy the scenery from the comfort of their cabin. There is a good-sized bathroom and shower, with a glass shower door and ample storage. Soap, shampoo, conditioner and hand sanitizing gel are provided. Standard cabin amenities include plasma-screen TVs, hair dryer, telephone, safe and air conditioning.

PUBLIC AREAS

The comfortable panoramic lounge and bar area, with a small dance floor, is at the heart of the ship. It leads to a small outside deck which is a good place to watch the paddlewheels in action and take photos as you sail past sights such as the towering Saint-Nazaire Bridge and a surreal house submerged in the river that is one of Nantes' art installations. The sun deck

has tables and chairs, loungers and a shaded area.

FOOD AND DRINK

There is one open seating restaurant which serves a leisurely breakfast and waiter-service lunch and dinner at set times. CroisiEurope places a lot of emphasis on its French heritage and meals onboard are inspired by French culinary traditions.



LOIRE PRINCESSE FAST FACTS

Passengers

96

Crew

15

Cabins

48

Cabin size

49 square feet (plus balconies on upper deck cabins)

Decks

3

Length

88m (295ft)

CroisiEurope USP

Value-for-money cruises offering a real taste of France.



TOP LEFT Loire Princesse TOP Lounge and Bar Area ABOVE Cabin

The breakfast buffet, whilst not as extensive as some lines, is perfectly adequate and includes fruit, yoghurt, cheese, cold meat, self-service hot dishes and, of course, freshly baked French bread and a variety of spreads. For lunch and dinner expect delicious regional dishes such as Quiche Lorraine plus other well-presented French favourites such as pâté to start and creamy desserts. Typically, meals are meat-heavy but dietary requirements are catered for and vegetarian options are readily available. Lunch and dinner is served with a choice of red or white wine - French of course - and unlimited beers, soft drinks, tea and coffee are also included in the fare.

SERVICE

Members of the crew are French and invariably charming, and each cruise has an English-speaking host. Service is prompt and attentive and by day two the bar and dining staff had remembered our favourite drinks. Tipping is discretionary and the

suggested rate is €5 to €10 per passenger, per day per person.

SHORE EXCURSIONS

The ship's docking spot in Nantes is ideally placed to explore Les Machines de L'île, a fantastic regeneration of the old shipyard inspired by science fiction author Jules Verne, who was born in Nantes. It includes a giant wooden elephant that gives rides along the bank. A walking tour of Nantes takes in charming medieval buildings and contemporary installations on the arts trail.

An excursion highlight, available on both itineraries, is a visit to Saint-Nazaire's STX France shipyard, birthplace of the Loire Princesse. Visitors currently get an amazing close-up view of Royal Caribbean International's Harmony of the Seas - the world's largest cruise ship - and when it is completed in spring 2016 work will start on the next Oasis-class ship. The excursion also includes a tour of the fascinating Escal' Atlantic. Saint-

Nazaire's former submarine base has been transformed into a recreation of the elegant ocean liners built in the city and is filled with original artefacts and interactive displays. Both itineraries feature a full-day excursion to Loire Valley castles, including Usse which inspired the fairytale Sleeping Beauty. Passengers on the longer cruise visit the renowned Cadre Noir in Saumur, the French National Riding School where 'dancing' horses performing classical dressage movements.

SELL IT

Available from April to October, the five-night itinerary leads in at £1,001pp and the seven-night cruise is £1,329pp based on two sharing, including all meals and drinks throughout the day (excluding Champagne and premium wines), shore excursions and complimentary wifi. The price does not include flights. ⚓

For further information call 0208 328 1281 or visit www.croisiurope.co.uk

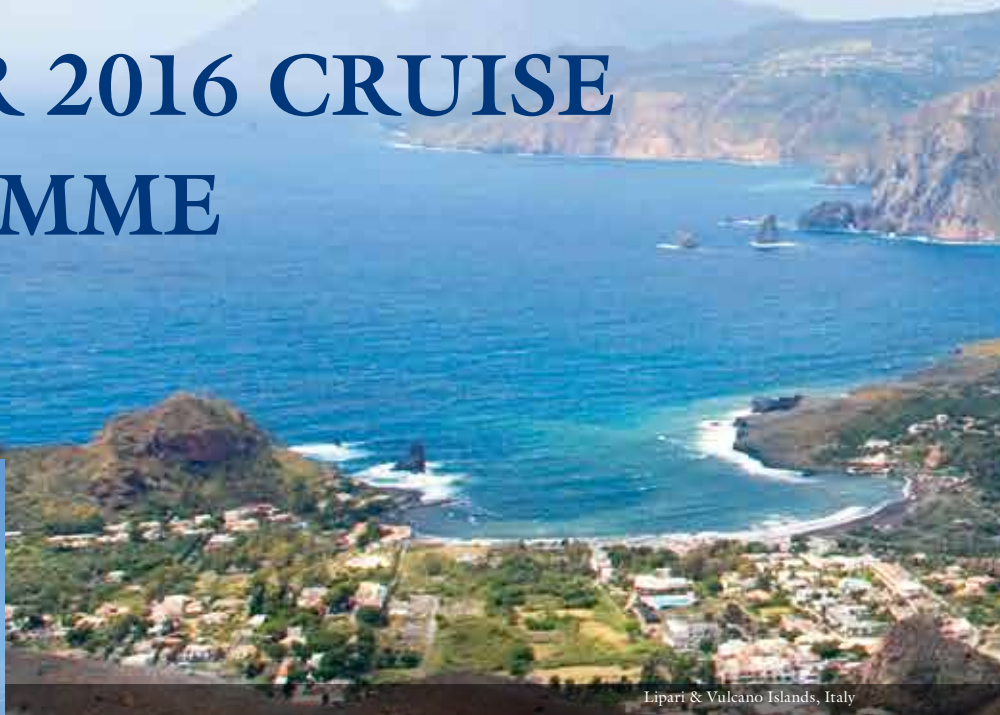
MINERVA'S FASCINATING SUMMER 2016 CRUISE PROGRAMME



Lisbon, Portugal



Northern Lights, Norway



Lipari & Vulcano Islands, Italy

Minerva embarks on an exciting programme of new cruises in summer 2016, visiting ports which offer you the chance to discover diverse landscapes, architectural gems and ancient sites.

Close to home, with the convenience of sailing from Portsmouth, cruise three of Europe's finest waterways, the Loire, Seine and Garonne Rivers, or spend two days in splendid St Petersburg as you discover the Baltic Sea region's finest treasures. Monet's famed gardens are a delight to explore from Honfleur, while Greenock is your gateway to the unique beauty of Loch Lomond.

Further afield, *Minerva* heads into Norwegian waters, embarks on an inaugural sailing from Kirkenes to the mysterious White Sea and cruises to the delightful shores of the Mediterranean from where you can step ashore on rugged islands, stroll amongst peaceful landscapes and revisit history amidst dramatic ruins.

There really is a cruise to suit every taste, and each includes a programme of shore excursions worth up to £650, flights and overseas transfers, where applicable, all meals, activities and entertainment on board, a Guest Speaker programme, all gratuities, portage of luggage, a complimentary chauffeur service for higher grade cabins and all port taxes.



For more information or marketing support contact TRADE SALES on 01858 588 406 or agencysales@alh.co.uk



Edinburgh Military Tattoo



Tower Bridge



Chelsea Flower Show



River Loire



Tall Ships Festival

DISCOVER *MINERVA'S* EXCITING NEW HIGHLIGHTS

Our brand new itineraries offer opportunities to sail along beautiful rivers, experience exciting cultural events and discover intriguing parts of the world, including a host of new ports of call. We hope you will be inspired to discover some of these spectacular destinations and experiences with us during summer 2016.

- Join ‘Celtic Traditions and Edinburgh’s Tattoo’ to discover historic Edinburgh, where you will experience the city’s magnificent Military Tattoo, featuring music, dance, military pageantry and an impressive fireworks finale.
- Take in London’s striking architecture as you sail down the River Thames on our ‘Glorious Gardens and the Chelsea Flower Show’ cruise, which also includes entry to the prestigious Chelsea Flower Show.
- On our wonderful ‘Trois-Rivières de France’ cruise, you can take in spectacular scenery along three fascinating rivers, combining coastal cruising with journeys along the Loire, Seine and Garonne.
- On our ‘Hidden White Sea and Norse Discovery’ cruise, join *Minerva* as she embarks on her very first cruise to the mysterious White Sea, where you can visit the beautiful Solovetsky Islands, home to a sacred monastery.
- Our ‘Iberian Maritime Adventure’ coincides with the Tall Ships Festival’s diamond anniversary, offering the unique opportunity for you to join the celebrations in atmospheric Lisbon and diverse Cadiz.



Cadiz, Spain

GLORIOUS GARDENS *and the* CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW

14 - 27 MAY 2016 *14-day cruise*
ENGLAND • FRANCE • CHANNEL ISLANDS • NETHERLANDS



Chelsea Flower Show, London

YOUR CRUISE HIGHLIGHTS

- Cruise designed in partnership with the Royal Horticultural Society and featuring a range of garden-themed excursions
- Stroll amongst the picturesque gardens of impressionist painter Claude Monet in Giverny
- Explore La Ville Intra-Muros, the ancient walled city of St Malo
- *Minerva* makes two maiden calls – to Douarnenez and Rotterdam
- Sail down the River Thames for a two-night stay in London, our own splendid capital
- Included entrance to the Chelsea Flower Show – perhaps the most famous horticultural show in the world

HELLENIC ODYSSEY

8 - 21 OCTOBER 2016 *14-day cruise*
CROATIA • GREECE • TURKEY



Milos, Greece

YOUR CRUISE HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore UNESCO-listed Dubrovnik, with its impressive city walls and marble streets
- *Minerva* transits the narrow Corinth Canal – a remarkable feat of engineering
- Experience an overnight stay in Nauplia, your gateway to legendary Mycenae
- *Minerva* makes her maiden call at the small Greek island of Milos
- Discover Fethiye, the jewel of Turkey’s Lycian coast and home to three UNESCO-listed sites – Kayakoy, Xanthos and ancient Letoon

FROM
£2,608
per person

FROM
£2,336
per person

RHS Garden Holidays
In partnership with RHS Garden Holidays

ONBOARD SPAS

Spas at sea are bigger and better than ever, and you can help spa-loving clients find the ship that suits them best. Point out that treatments are often discounted on port days when most passengers are ashore. Here's our guide to five of the best.



CUNARD QUEEN MARY 2

Why Luxury brand Canyon Ranch launched its first SpaClub at sea on the QM2. One of the largest spas afloat, the 20,000 sq. ft. complex is spread over two decks and features 24 massage, body and skincare treatment rooms, including two rooms for couples. Facilities include an aqua therapy pool, sensory showers, herbal sauna and ice fountain. In addition to treatments, passengers can purchase daily passes for the Aqua Therapy Centre, from \$40 for one day to \$105 for six.

Signature treatment A 100-minute Detoxifying Ritual including a Moroccan mint tea cleanse, coffee, olive stone and lemon scrub, clay wrap and massage. Price \$288.

www.cunard.co.uk



P&O CRUISES BRITANNIA

Why In addition to 16 treatment rooms, the line's latest flagship boasts an all-new private villa spa area where couples and friends can unwind with a personal spa therapist for a treatment of their choice and glass of Champagne. Also new is a 'blowout' styling menu in the hair salon, ideal for a sleek blow dry for photographs and formal evenings. The adjoining Retreat, with designated loungers and cabanas for treatments, is an exclusive adults-only outdoor spa terrace where numbers are limited. Day passes from £25.

Signature treatment Combining precious gems and plant extracts, the 75-minute 24 Karat Gold Facial is the ultimate treat. Price £230.

www.pocruires.com



COSTA CRUISES **COSTA DIADEMA**

Why This line revolutionised the industry with its 'destination spas' and complete spa packages with special cabins. Diadema, the new jewel in the fleet, has a vast 66,700 sq. ft. four-level spa and leisure area, the largest on a Costa vessel. The Samsara Spa includes a Thalassotherapy pool, Turkish bath and treatment rooms, with 130 cabins and 11 suites located nearby for easy access to the spa. Guests in the tranquil Samsara cabins get extra benefits, such as dining options in the Samsara restaurant.

Signature treatment La Therapie HydraLift Facial is a luxuriant 50-minute youth-enhancing treatment. Price €119.

www.costacruises.co.uk



ROYAL CARIBBEAN INTERNATIONAL **ANTHEM OF THE SEAS**

Why The Vitality at Sea Spa on the recently launched Anthem of the Seas has 22 treatment rooms, including two for couples, and uses professional products from brands such as Elemis, Bliss, La Therapie and Ionthermie to provide indulgent treatments. There is also a special spa menu designed for teens. To maintain tranquillity only a limited number of day passes are available for the thermal suite, costing \$30, or \$20 with the purchase of a treatment.

Signature Treatment Dripping warm oil followed by a body exfoliation and massage adds up to the invigorating 100-minute Elemis Exotic Lime & Ginger Salt Glow. Price \$155.

www.royalcaribbean.co.uk

CRYSTAL CRUISES **CRYSTAL SERENITY**

Why Boasting the first Feng Shui-inspired spa at sea, the multi-award winning Crystal Spa & Salon is a soothing retreat with Zen rock gardens and fountains. The dry-float bed suite, for individual passengers or couples, contains an innovative sensory bed to create a feeling of weightlessness. For an all-day escape signature treatments incorporate multiple facial and body therapies with sessions lasting up to six hours.

Signature Treatment Lasting 100 minutes, the top to toe Elemis Absolute Spa Ritual includes a marine facial, Swedish massage or deep tissue muscle massage. Price \$287.

www.crystalcruises.co.uk



GO WITH THE FLOW

River cruising is the fastest growing sector of the cruise industry. If you're new to the market here's our first-timer guide on how to encourage your clients to take the plunge.

BY JEANNINE WILLIAMSON







Europe's Finest River Cruises



Rhine, Danube, Moselle, Main, Elbe, Rhône, Seine or Douro

8 days from £999pp or 14 days from £1,399pp

Departures up to November 2015 & April to November 2016

Price includes:

- Five-Star & Four-Star superior ships
- All visits & tours included
- Exceptional cuisine with full-board throughout
- All of our ships are exclusively chartered by us
- Hosted by our own on-board team
- Award winning service



For further information or to book, please call **01283 744370** or email **agencysales@rivieratravel.co.uk** to speak to our agency sales team.



Holidays organised by and subject to the booking conditions of Riviera Travel, ABTA V4744 and ATOL 3430 protected. Price based on two people sharing a twin cabin. Single cabins and optional insurance available at a supplement. Images used in conjunction with Riviera Travel. Additional entrance costs may apply. Cruise duration dependent on selected itinerary.

From dazzling Dutch bulb fields in springtime to Germany's Christmas markets - plus a host of other European itineraries and exotic destinations including China, Myanmar, Vietnam and Cambodia - river cruises offer a world of sights and experiences.

River cruising is continuing to make waves as the fastest growing sector of both the UK travel industry and the global cruise market. CLIA UK & Ireland research shows a 22% increase in the number of Brits who took a European river cruise last year. With almost 30 new ships being launched this year, along with an even wider choice of cruises and river cruise companies, there's never been a better time to get on board.

WILL IT SUIT MY CLIENT?

Traditionally river cruises attract a mature 55-plus clientele. However, with inclusive fares and vessels such as A-Rosa's bright ships with gyms and spas and Emerald's fun swimming pool and cinema set-up, there's plenty to appeal to younger clients.

Like ocean cruising, a major plus factor is only having to pack and unpack once, but overall the product is very different. In Europe the size of vessels is limited by locks and low bridges, so ships are small and carry 200 people or less. This creates an intimate atmosphere, with plenty of opportunity to get to know other passengers.

Ships moor in the heart of towns and cities, so there are no long coach transfers to reach the sights and independent passengers can simply walk off and explore by themselves. River cruises provide an



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP Emerald Waterways grand balcony suite; AmaWaterways wine tasting in the Duoro Valley, Portugal; Scenic cycling tour; European Waterways Panache

PREVIOUS PAGE Viking longship Aquavit Terrace



excellent opportunity to switch-sell to clients interested in city breaks, as typical week-long European itineraries take in three countries and capitals such as Budapest and Vienna. An increasing number of lines are introducing themed cruises, including wine appreciation, cookery, opera and music.

Finally, another big plus is that there's no danger of being seasick.

LIFE ON BOARD

All cabins are river-facing, so even when you're relaxing in your room you won't miss the passing scenery. Again, the size of vessels means cabins are fairly compact, however most lines have some larger

staterooms and companies including Viking feature two large suites with a separate lounge and bedroom. Many cabins have French balconies - with fully retractable windows and a railing - or full walk-out private verandas. They are well equipped with good-sized bathrooms and showers, complimentary toiletries, comfortable hotel-style beds, TVs and entertainment centres and ample storage. Wifi is complimentary.

River cruises are relaxed, with no formal dress code, and although some passengers dress up for the captain's welcome drink or gala dinner it is not obligatory. Entertainment is low-key with a resident pianist and local singers, dancers and musicians who come aboard to

A TO Z GUIDE TO RIVER CRUISE LINES

A-Rosa With selected cruises sold through Titan Travel, the family-friendly German-owned company is new to the British market and features excellent gyms and spas.

Amadeus by Luefner

Green Globe certified, this environmentally-friendly line offers well-priced a la carte cruises.

AmaWaterways The only river cruise line that is a member of the prestigious culinary organisation La Chaine des

Rotisseurs, the stylish ships are renowned for excellent food.

Avalon Waterways The newest all-suite ships feature cabins that are 30% larger than the industry standard with floor-to-ceiling sliding windows.

CroisiEurope One of the pioneers of river cruising, the French-owned line recently introduced an innovative paddlewheeler on the Loire.

Emerald Waterways

Contemporary cruising with a modern vibe, including novel

swimming pools that turn into cinemas at night.

European Waterways Offering an intimate experience on canals and waterways on barges that sleep six to 20 passengers.

Scenic Luxury Cruises and Tours

Formerly Scenic Tours, and rebranded in April, the all-inclusive cruises include butler service in every cabin.

Riviera Travel Value-for-money cruises that are aimed exclusively at the British market.

Tauck River Cruising

The elegant and upmarket American-owned line recently debuted in the UK.

The River Cruise Line This UK tour operator has a fleet of comfortable ships that are popular with groups.

Uniwold Renowned for opulent ships decorated with antiques and lavish furnishings, there is butler service in suites.

Viking River Cruises The world's largest river cruise line operates a fleet of sleek Scandinavian-style 'longships'.



MS KONINGSDAM

Arrives Spring 2016



PREMIER SEASON

MEDITERRANEAN • NORTHERN EUROPE • CARIBBEAN

Tell us three things you know about Koningsdam and you could win a special hamper
Runners up win Holland America Line Belgian Chocolates!

email katie.brickell@hollandamerica.co.uk with your answers by 12th June 2015.

PS: You'll find some hints on page 49 of Cruise Trade News!



TOP SELLING TIPS

FROM NEIL BARCLAY
HEAD OF UK SALES, VIKING RIVER CRUISES

- ✦ **Always ask your** clients if they have thought about a river cruise, even if they come in for a land based package, a great way to plant the seed and engage in conversation.
- ✦ **The beauty of** river cruising is you have great views either side of you day and night plus, with central docking spots, no long transfers to town.
- ✦ **Flights, transfers, full** board, drinks with lunch and dinner, free wifi and daily excursions included which represents great value for money, so easy to budget.
- ✦ **Choice of staterooms** to suit everyone's pocket from standard to veranda to suites - all with a river view.
- ✦ **River cruise vessels** may be smaller than their ocean counterparts but there is ample outside deck space to sit and relax as well as various lounges within the vessel.
- ✦ **Dress code is** relaxed and informal.

TOP LEFT Viking longship on the Rhine ABOVE AmaWaterways cookery class

with an omelette station and the option of ordering items from the menu. The logistics of catering from a small galley means that lunch and dinner - usually buffet and a la carte waiter-service respectively - are served at set times, although there is a degree of flexibility for passengers who want to come in a little later and some offer 24-hour room service. Lighter meals can be enjoyed in the lounge, or outside on the sun deck, and some vessels have barbecues, smaller speciality restaurants and a chef's table with a tasting menu and wine pairings. Ships are equipped with 24/7 tea and coffee-making facilities and snacks are available throughout the day.

In the main dining room there is always an open-seating policy, so passengers can sit where they want each day. Tables are generally for four or more, and couples who prefer to dine alone can eat in the lounge or opt for one of the alternative dining venues. ⚓

perform. Ships usually have a small library, cards and board games.

Culture-rich excursions, included in the fare, are a daily highlight and often graded according to the amount of walking involved. In addition to guided city tours they include market visits and cookery classes with the chef, cycling, concerts and other immersive experiences.

FOOD & DRINK

Like ocean cruises, food plays a major role

and river cruise cuisine is certainly not the poorer relation of its seagoing cousin, and lines such as AmaWaterways and Uniworld take pride in fine dining. All meals are included, and the majority of lines serve complimentary wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner. Some are all-inclusive with unlimited bar drinks and, on Scenic for example, include minibars that are restocked daily.

Breakfasts are generally expansive buffets, spread over a couple of hours,

SELL IT

Titan Travel offers a seven-night all-inclusive Castles Along the Rhine cruise, from March to November. From £1,849pp, for a departure in March 2016, the price includes unlimited drinks, excursions, tips, flights and Titan's VIP Home Departure Service providing home to airport transfers.
0800 988 5873
www.titantravel.co.uk/uniworld

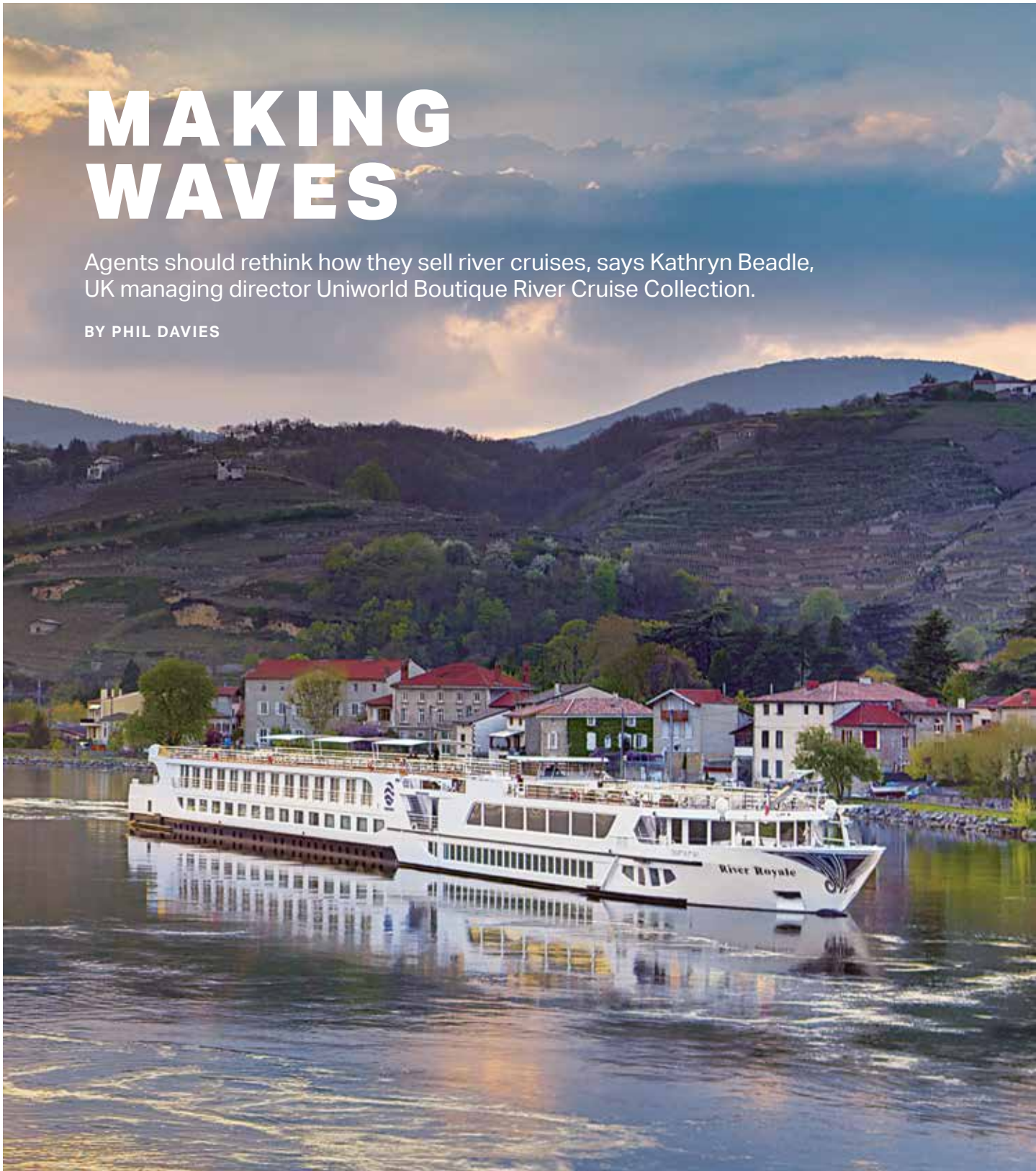
European Waterways has a six-night French itinerary in Alsace and Lorraine on the 12-passenger hotel barge Panache, from £3,250pp, including all meals, drinks and excursions. Sailing from Strasbourg to Niderviller, highlights include an ascent in the Arzwiller boat lift and a private wine tasting tour. Not including flights.
01753 598555
www.gobarging.com

AmaWaterways' 13-night Golden Treasures of Myanmar cruise from Mandalay to Pyay, taking in the ruins of the world's largest brick pagoda at Pathodawgi, is priced from £4,769pp, departing 18th January, 2016, including three nights' hotel accommodation, ten-night cruise, flights, excursions and all meals with wine, beer and soft drinks.
0808 256 8422
www.amawaterways.co.uk

MAKING WAVES

Agents should rethink how they sell river cruises, says Kathryn Beadle, UK managing director Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection.

BY PHIL DAVIES



The term ‘chalk and cheese’ springs to mind when describing Kathryn Beadle’s switch from Hurtigruten to heading Uniworld in the UK.

Both may be specialist cruise companies but there the similarity ends.

Rather than promoting coastal voyages

on working ships that ply the Norwegian coastline, Beadle is now responsible for selling what are arguably the most luxurious river cruises afloat, seen by many as the Ritz Carlton of the rivers.

From an outsider’s perspective it could be seen as swapping austerity for opulence.

But Beadle, recruited from the Norwegian coastal voyage company to establish a stand-alone presence for Uniworld in the UK, is quick to dismiss the suggestion.

“It is a contrast but there is also enormous similarities because both are

a niche product," she says. "Both attract customers who are well travelled and are certainly looking for value but the ticket price isn't the driver at all.

"They don't want to drop and flop, they want to go on holiday and get some benefit out of it, be it some form of education, visiting a new place or getting an exciting new experience."

However, Uniworld's offering is described by Beadle as being "top of the range luxury".

"We have this saying 'No request too big, no detail too small' – our *raison d'être* is for the customer," she says.

Uniworld continues to work with Titan for distribution to consumers while Beadle, who joined the US-based river cruise specialist six months ago, is working to encourage more agent bookings.

Only four per cent of total sales come from the UK, a proportion Beadle hopes to raise to ten per cent in five years.

She has secured an ATOL licence for the company to allow it to act as a tour operator in its own right.

This has also triggered the release of a new Asia programme featuring India for the first time, as well as a return to Egypt with Nile cruises from September.

Brochure prices across the range are cruise and land-only but the ATOL gives Uniworld the ability to build in flights at the best available fare, offering more options and protection for agents and their clients. It also means that agents can self-package by adding flights to cruises.

Beadle is quick to portray the Uniworld offering as an upmarket boutique hotel break that happens to be based on board a boat. She believes agents should market the river cruising concept in such a way to attract well travelled – and well heeled – clients who are looking for cultural, historical and memorable experiences from their holidays.

With average prices of £3,500 for a week, Uniworld is not for the budget conscious, but Beadle believes its all-inclusive offering presents an opportunity for agents to enhance their commission earnings over ocean cruise bookings.

She concedes that a process is required to educate the trade about the different rivers, the diverse number of river cruise operators and their expanding fleets – and praises CLIA UK & Ireland for its training modules and annual river cruise convention. "There's a lot more competition than there was a few years ago and if you look at the number of ships being launched, it's phenomenal," she says.

"Uniworld is mindful that the majority of its business is from the States and it wants to spread that more across the globe.

"It made absolute sense in what was the second largest cruise market that we had an office here, it was an obvious next step. My remit initially is to concentrate on the trade, get around to see all the trade partners and move it on from there."

But the attention river cruising receives from many agents is "negligible," she argues, adding that the kind of passengers who may take an ocean cruise are not the same as those taking river trips.



"No request is too big, no detail too small."

KATHRYN BEADLE
UK managing director, Uniworld
Boutique River Cruise Collection

"Most [agents] recognise there is an opportunity with river [cruising]; I think some agents have a way to go to understand how to promote it. Business is coming from a small number of agents and the big accounts with a large [ocean cruise] market share don't have that with river.

"They all want to get into river, but one of the big challenges is to understand that river is very different from ocean cruising."

Beadle adds: "River cruising sits under the cruising sector but it needs a different mindset and different marketing. River cruise boats are floating hotels, a fantastic way of seeing a multiple number of destinations with all the facilities that a hotel offers.

"I'm not interested in sitting in the cruise sector; I would much rather be in a city break or touring arenas. As we evolve

and grow the sector, that will come. It just needs that understanding from agents."

Uniworld claims 98% customer satisfaction levels and a 40% repeat booking level from the US, its main market.

With local food sourcing and provenance being highlighted as a priority by increasing numbers of consumers, Uniworld claims to be unique in ensuring the use of produce, wines and craft beers selected from the destinations its river cruisers visit. Passengers join the on board chefs on shopping trips to local markets as they prepare dishes designed to reflect the region they are sailing in.

Beadle is also keen to dispel any thoughts that river cruising is solely for the sedentary. The reality is quite the reverse, she stresses.

Travellers need to be fit and healthy to take advantage of the vast range of excursions, many of which are organised on a one-off basis to "do as the locals do".

These can entail walking cobbled streets on city explorations, climbing stairs to view ancient castles and cycling along the towpath on one of the fleet of bicycles carried on the company's fleet of 13 vessels which sail on Europe's waterways.


Another myth Uniworld is anxious to dispel is that river cruising is not child friendly. On the contrary, the company has five departures this year specifically aimed at multi-generational family groups.

Beadle has ensured that extra dates allocated for 2016 are aligned with UK school holidays to make them more accessible to parents and grandparents travelling together with children, who are provided with specific facilities and excursions.

As a result, the number of designated multi-generational cruises has been more than doubled to cover 13 departures next year on itineraries covering the rivers Rhine, Danube, Seine, Main – for Christmas markets – and northern Italy from Venice.

River cruising will become increasingly appealing to families looking for fun, education and culture as part of their holiday, Beadles believes.

This will gain a massive kick-start by Disney's decision to work with AmaWaterways from next year on a series of dedicated family-focused departures on Europe's waterways.

"The obvious evolution of the sector is product developed for children. It's an area we've expanded for 2016," Beadle confirms. 

ELEGANCE ON THE RIVER

Discover luxury on an intimate scale with family owned Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection



The family owned Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection offers 38 expertly planned itineraries in 26 countries. The cruises explore the rivers of Europe, Russia, Egypt, China, Vietnam & Cambodia, and new to 2016, India. Each one-of-a-kind ship is designed to offer comfort and luxury on an intimate scale with an average capacity of 130 guests on each vessel. With such a small number of passengers, it offers the highest staff-to-guest ratio in the river cruise industry.

Each ship has been individually designed and decorated to combine Old World elegance with all the modern conveniences. Each stateroom has a marble bathroom, flat screen television and individual climate control. Elegant public spaces provide the perfect place to connect with fellow travellers over a drink and the ship's Sun Deck offers Al Fresco dining. From sunset to sunrise, guests will find culinary delights created by a talented team of chefs using sustainably produced and locally sourced ingredients. Enjoy buffet style breakfasts and lunches, with something new to try every day, before a dinner of several courses in a relaxed and refined setting.

Once guests have stepped onshore they can take advantage of Uniworld's customisable excursions to explore the local city, town or village. Each day there will be the option to participate in hosted small group excursions including "Do as the Locals Do" and "Village Day" programmes which delve into the heart and soul of a region to see it from a local perspective, or "Get Active" hiking and biking excursions. Uniworld also offers a range of "Exclusive Excursions" including the opportunity to sip cocktails with a real-life princess in an Austrian Castle or enjoy a special evening opening without the crowds at the historic St Mark's Basilica in Venice. With Uniworld's "Choice is Yours" options, guests can enjoy the flexibility and freedom to explore alternative sites for a personalised experience.

Uniworld welcomes solo travellers, groups and multi-generational families, all catered for amongst the choice of itineraries. Single passengers can enjoy reduced or no single supplements on a range of cruises and groups of friends or society members can gather and share in the experience of a river cruise. The company also offers multigenerational departures



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT
S.S. Antoinette on the Rhine; S.S. Catherine suite; S.S. Maria Theresa lobby; Douro Spirit al fresco; S.S. Maria Theresa suite



with family friendly itineraries planned around school holidays and include entertaining onshore and on-board programmes for all ages.

2015 has been an exciting year for Uniworld with the Super Ship, S.S. Maria Theresa, becoming the latest vessel to be added to the fleet. This baroque inspired ship will sail down the Danube and the Rhine. This year, the cruise line also announced the resumption of "Splendours of Egypt and the Nile" cruise which will re-commence this October to give guests the chance to explore the ancient wonders of Egypt in luxury and style once more. Bookings are now also being taken for the new "India's Golden Triangle and the Sacred Ganges" itinerary which will launch on the Ganges Voyager II in 2016 and includes land stays in some of India's most vibrant cities before setting sail down the famous Ganges River. Departures for 2016 are now on sale with Early Booking Discounts available on a range of itineraries giving couples the chance to save up to £1,200.

Travel agents should keep in touch with the Uniworld UK office for further updates and news of regular incentives.





THE BATTLE TO BE BEST

The luxury cruise market is evolving all the time. Here is a look at what's coming for clients with money to spend.

BY JANE ARCHER



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Mike Flanagan

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Phone: +44 79 21 223176



**Hapag-Lloyd
Cruises**

All top-end cruise lines believe they are the best – let's face it, it would be strange if they didn't – but when one dares to tell the world it is building the world's most luxurious ship, you sit up and take notice.

Regent Seven Seas Cruises' new Seven Seas Explorer was dubbed - by the company - the most luxurious cruise ship ever built before the first pieces of steel had been cut. As it doesn't launch until July next year, it will be some time before we can judge for ourselves but you can't help but be impressed by some of the features that will be on board.

Picking up on the new trend for learning to cook at sea, it will have a hands-on kitchen where chefs will teach up to 18 passengers how to prepare fish, desserts and regional dishes from the countries they are visiting. It will also have a gourmet French restaurant called Chartreuse, an Observation Lounge modelled on the Roaring Twenties and the largest suite at sea - a whopping 3,875 square feet - with its own spa with a sauna, steam room and treatment area (the treatments are included in the price).

But Regent can't have it all its own way. Seabourn reckons the Seabourn Encore will be tops for luxury when it launches in December next year – and passengers seem equally sure it will be a winner as its inaugural voyage sold out in two days.

The ship (and sibling Seabourn Ovation, launching in spring 2018) is modelled on Seabourn's Odyssey-class ships, but has an extra deck so it can hold 604 passengers instead of 450. It will have most of the features that are popular on the Odyssey-class ships, and also two new speciality dining venues, but so far that is all Seabourn has revealed.

Not to be outdone, following its acquisition by Genting Hong Kong in March, Crystal Cruises announced it will be building a new ship that will 'set the highest standard in luxury cruise ships'. It is not the first time the company has talked of adding tonnage. When she took over at the helm in October 2013, president and chief operating officer Edie Rodriguez said she wanted to build the two-ship fleet into seven vessels.

So far nothing has happened; instead the company, which celebrates its 25th anniversary this year, has ploughed millions of dollars into upgrading its two ships as well as enhancing the on board product with new features such as more overnights in ports such as Barcelona, Dubrovnik and Monte Carlo, and jogging

excursions for those who want to see the sights on the run.

Fitness freaks should also check out Europa 2, which has a new training and nutritional programme in 2016. It's been devised by Germany Winter Olympian Maria Höfl-Riesch, who will join cruises in May and November 2016 and train alongside passengers.

SIX STAR ALL-INCLUSIVES

One problem for agents selling into the luxury cruise market is understanding the different levels of swankiness their clients can buy into and the endless permutations

when it comes to what they get for their money. Regent, Seabourn and Crystal occupy the top of the market, along with Hapag Lloyd Cruises' Europa 2, Silversea's five classic ships (as opposed to its expedition fleet) and SeaDream Yacht Club's two 112-passenger mega-yachts, which spend their summers in the Med and winter in the Caribbean.

All sell themselves on small ships, personal service, gourmet dining and inclusive prices. They include gratuities in the cruise price, and all bar Hapag Lloyd Cruises serve complimentary soft and alcoholic drinks (on Europa 2 beer and soft

"We are taking the entertainment up a notch"

ORLANDO ASHFORD
president, Holland America Line



A KING IS BORN

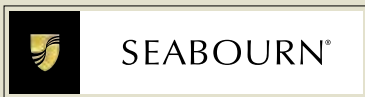
Hands-on cookery classes, a seafood brasserie called Sel de Mer and Grand Dutch Café decorated in blue and white are among new features on Koningsdam, the new Holland America Line ship launching in April 2016.

The 2,650-passenger vessel will also have 32 family cabins with two bathrooms that hold up to five people and 12 oceanview single rooms – the first accommodation in the fleet to cater for solo travellers, a new Music Walk featuring three live music venues including the BB King's Blues Club and Billboard Onboard.

Holland America president Orlando Ashford said: "We are taking the entertainment up a notch with this ship and it will be making its way into the rest of the fleet." He added that Dinner, a new farm-to-table dining concept in the ship's Culinary Arts Centre, will also be rolled out to other ships.

Koningsdam will spend its inaugural season cruising the Baltic and Norwegian fjords from Amsterdam between May and September. Prices start from £849 per person cruise-only for a seven-night Viking Sagas cruise departing May 22.

Holland America Line, Cunard and Celebrity Cruises all offer a big ship five-star experience based on the standard cruising price model that includes dining room and buffet food and entertainment.



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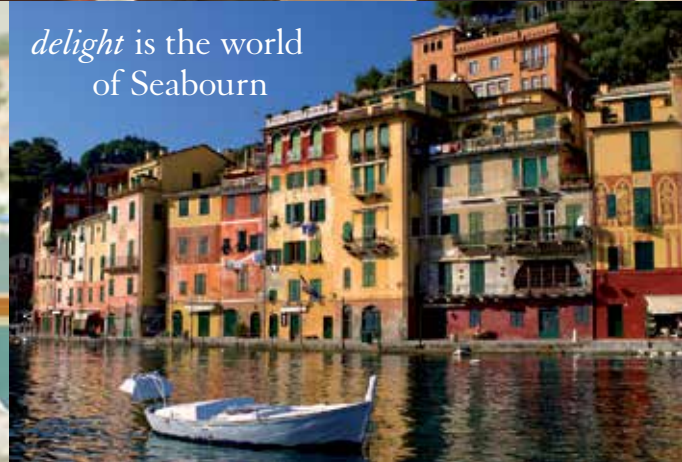
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CRUISING BY APPOINTMENT

If clients prefer their luxury in smaller packages, point them in the direction of Hebridean Island Cruises, which has just one ship, the 50-passenger Hebridean Princess.

This is not one to sell to customers who are counting their pennies – a seven-night Hebridean Explorer cruise departing September 22 costs from £3,800 per person

drinks from the minibar are free but you pay for drinks at the bars).

All these lines also offer open dining in the restaurants – and most do not charge for speciality dining - on the grounds that luxury clients do not want to be told when to eat and who to sit with. The exception is Crystal, which also offers traditional fixed dining.

Crystal vice-president international sales and marketing Philip Ordever said about two-thirds of passengers opt for fixed dining. “Past guests tend to prefer fixed dining, which is why we continue to offer it, while those who are new to Crystal usually choose our Dining by Reservation.”

Regent also includes most shore excursions, as well as flights, transfers and a pre-cruise hotel night abroad in the cruise price, making it the world's most-inclusive cruise line - a position Silversea is partly challenging this year by including

excluding flights – or indeed those for whom luxury is synonymous with opulence.

Instead, this has become the Queen’s favourite cruise ship for its understated luxury - upmarket country-house furnishings, a friendly atmosphere and everything bar travel to Scotland included in the price.

shore excursions and wifi, but so far with Mediterranean cruises only.

A PREMIUM PRODUCT

Equally convinced that small is best, Azamara Club Cruises, Ponant, Oceania Cruises and the new Viking Ocean Cruises are a good alternative for clients looking for more affordable luxury because their prices are less inclusive.

As an example, Oceania Cruises offers an eight-night cruise from Piraeus (for Athens) to Venice next May costs from £2,669 per person including flights. The same cruise, but in seven nights, with Seabourn costs £3,199 per person excluding flights, while SeaDream has a seven-night voyage from Venice to Dubrovnik in September from £4,072 per person, also excluding flights.

Of course it is vital clients understand they get what they pay for. Ponant, for

New for 2016, Hebridean has various themed cruises focusing on heritage, history, food and drink, whisky, architecture, gardens and classical music, as well as three Footloose walking cruises.

Cruises are mostly around the Scottish isles, but there are also voyages to Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man.

instance, includes drinks but excludes gratuities, while Oceania Cruises excludes drinks and gratuities, but includes most speciality dining and flights. Viking, which launched its first ocean-going ship in April (see news story page 4), includes flights, transfers, drinks with lunch and dinner, speciality dining and wifi.

The line also includes one complimentary shore excursion per port (there are alternative tours but at a charge). Viking Cruises chairman Torstein Hagen said: “Along with our privileged-access excursions and onboard enrichment, we have made the destination the true focus of our new ocean cruises.”

Viking will be taking delivery of another ocean ship in 2016 and one in 2017; also next year Oceania Cruises is taking delivery of Sirena, currently sailing as Ocean Princess for Princess Cruises. ⚓

CANAL VISION

The cruise port cities of Amsterdam, Copenhagen and Hamburg have one thing in common. Each has canal tours on offer and what better way of seeing a city than on these waterways.

BY SUSAN PARKER



Population
780,000

Currency
Euro

Proximity to city centre
500 metres

Tourism office
Inside the terminal

Tourism
www.iamsterdam.com

Shore excursions
Canal tour, Anne Frank House, Van Gogh Museum, Muiderslot castle



AMSTERDAM

The Amsterdam Canal Ring was designated a Unesco world heritage site in 2010. It has more than 100km of canals, about 90 islands and 1,500 bridges. The three main canals -Herengracht, Prinsengracht, and Keizersgracht - were dug in the 17th century during the Dutch Golden Age and form concentric belts around the city.

De Negen Straatjes form the ideal backdrop for enjoying the variation the city has to offer for locals and tourists alike. Along its cobbled avenues a mix of independent shops, galleries, bars and restaurants can be found.

Canal tours are a great way to take it all in and provide insight into the Dutch city's long and fascinating history. For art lovers the Van Gogh Museum is a must. For history, the Anne Frank House tells the story of this extraordinary young Jewish girl. Cycling is a national pastime and what better way to explore the city or even go further afield on a tour, for example north to Waterland or south to fortified towns such as Weesp.

The famous 'brown' cafes abound and one that stands out is In t Aepjen on the Zeedijk which dates from 1544. At the other end of the spectrum is the SkyLounge Amsterdam in the Hilton Doubletree next to Central station and the terminal. Twelfth floor views over the historic city centre are breathtaking on a clear day.

HAMBURG

As an introduction to Hamburg, a city tour from the town hall to HafenCity is a great place to start. From the cholera epidemic to the great fire to world port, the history is related along with anecdotes about the locals.

Hamburg to me is a hidden gem. Few people are aware of how beautiful this city is or the treasures it offers up in terms of places to visit. One of my favourites is the International Maritime Museum housed in a listed building Kaispeicher B. Three thousand years of maritime history are on display and there's a great restaurant on the ground floor.

On a similar theme but aimed more towards the young is Miniatur Wunderland, the largest model railway in the world. Equally appealing is the Chocolate Museum/ Chocoversum where a 90-minute tour immerses visitors in the art of chocolate as well as offering tastes on every step of the production process.

Whether by canal or cycle path, this city is a gem to get around and there are tours aplenty. Be sure to take in Elbphilharmonie, the concert hall designed by Herzog & Meuron which is due to open January 11 2017 after 10 years in the making.

At the other end of the spectrum is a 'Whores through history' tour which is led by an actress dressed as a 19th century prostitute



Population
1.7m

Currency
Euro

Proximity to city centre
HafenCity 2.5km;
Altona 6km;
Überseebrücke 2km;
Steinwerder 9km

Tourism office
Terminals and main train station

Tourism
www.hamburg-tourism.de

Shore excursions
Miniatur
Wunderland,
Chocoversum,
International
Maritime Museum
Lubeck



This city is a gem to get around and there are tours aplenty.

who guides visitors through the red light districts of the Reeperbahn and St Pauli.

If you do want to venture further afield the obvious choice is Unesco world heritage Lubeck. Founded in 1143 as the first western city on the Baltic Sea coast, was a member of the Hanseatic League. Nature lovers might prefer to visit Hamburg Wadden Sea National Park, a Unesco world heritage site since 2011. Situated downriver Elbe from Hamburg it encompasses sand banks, mudflats, seals and migrating birds.



COPENHAGEN

Whether visiting in summer or winter Copenhagen has much to offer. Christmas markets are a big deal when it comes to arriving cruise passengers who can then head for the Tivoli Gardens which has to be first on the day's agenda. Founded in 1843 it has much to offer all ages from theme park rides to open air music and plenty of eateries if you need to stop.

A guided canal tour will take you past most of the city's sights including the Little Mermaid and the old quayside of Nyhavn which is now a place buzzing with life, music and laughter as well as local food restaurants.

If, like me, you are a fan of Scandinavian design then I recommend a visit to the Design-museum which has permanent and special exhibitions and features both international, local and contemporary design.

If it's history you are after the top three visited spots are the Queen's residence of Amalienborg Palace, Christiansborg Palace and Rosenborg Castle. Finally the castle is set in The King's Garden with 400 years of history on display including the crown jewels and royal regalia.

By now it might be time for some liquid sustenance. In which case Visit Carlsberg might be a happy stop. Here dray horses are still working and on view. Importantly the tour finishes in the Jacobsen Brewhouse & Bar.

If venturing further afield Unesco World Heritage site, Kronborg Castle - the home of Hamlet in Elsinore/Helsingor - is just 40 minutes away. If you are there in the summer you might be lucky enough to coincide with the annual Shakespeare Festival.

Population
1.26m

Currency
Danish Kroner

Proximity to city centre
Langelinie Quay, 6 mins;
Ocean Quay, 11 mins

Tourism office
Copenhagen Visitors Centre opposite Tivoli Garden

Tourism
www.visitcopenhagen.dk

Shore excursions
Tivoli Gardens, canal tours, Amalienborg Palace, Christiansborg Palace, Rosenborg Castle





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*Full details of membership costs can be found at cruiseexperts.org

LAND VERSUS SEA

Many clients still wrongly think that cruises are an expensive holiday - which is far from the truth, particularly when visiting a number of locations in a short time. Take this example, where we compare both types of break for a family of four in the **Mediterranean**.

THE RESULT

The saving made on taking the cruise option over the multi-centre land option was a massive **£6114 (278%)**.

Cruise ship holidays offer good value for money these days and it's worth mentioning cruise options to clients who are looking at taking a multi-centre trip. They will save a significant amount of time not having to take the extra flights, time that can instead be spent on board relaxing and enjoying the entertainment and facilities. There's also the convenience of not having to find restaurants, bars, carrying luggage, packing and unpacking, etc. The floating hotel takes all those hassles away.



MULTI-CENTRE LAND ITINERARY

The below costs are based on a family of four taking a comparable route flying between locations and staying in three- or four-star hotels. Departing from London on June 13.

- DAY 1-2** Flight to Palma, Majorca £312, two hotel nights in Palma £435
- DAY 3** Flight from Palma to Corsica £1668, one hotel night in Corsica £350
- DAY 4** Flight from Corsica to Rome £1268, one hotel night in Rome £281
- DAY 5** Flight from Rome to Florence £360, one hotel night in Florence £256
- DAY 6** Flight from Florence to Saint Tropez £1840, one hotel night in Saint Tropez £225
- DAY 7** Flight from Saint Tropez to Barcelona £381, one hotel night in Barcelona £158
- DAY 8** Flight to London £303

MULTI-CENTRE LAND BILL

Travel and board	£7774
Meals	£336
Drinks (soft)	£105
Entertainment	£100
TOTAL	£8315



CRUISE ITINERARY

Highlights of the Mediterranean Cruise itinerary on board the Thomson Dream departing from Gatwick on June 13.

- DAY 1** Fly to Palma, Majorca
- DAY 2** At sea
- DAY 3** Calvi, Corsica
- DAY 4** Civitavecchia (for Rome)
- DAY 5** Livorno (for Florence & Pisa)
- DAY 6** St Raphael (for St Tropez & Cannes)
- DAY 7** Spain, Barcelona
- DAY 8** Palma, Majorca fly to London



CRUISE BILL

Included: Full board, flights, gratuities, activities, entertainment and port taxes.	
TOTAL	£2201

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- ✓ The service helps the elderly and / or less able to cruise more frequently
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CRUISE LINES SHOULD BE EVENTFUL

As MICE and Charter agents continue to seek unique locations and destinations around the world for their conferences, meetings and incentives, their normal route is to base their search on hotels, conference centres and unique event spaces. Cruise ships are often overlooked and not considered for this purpose as they are perceived as more of a leisure option.

As the cruise industry continues to grow, with many more ships launching and sailing around the world, this creates an opportunity for agents and cruise lines to utilise ship space for more than just leisure travel. With the amount of cruise lines available, there is definitely the opportunity for agents to develop their MICE/Charter and Incentive business by using cruise lines as an alternative.

Cruise vessels offer a wide selection of differently sized ships accommodating a variety of guests and on board venues from conference, meetings and lecture areas, top-class stage and lighting facilities as well as excellent food and delegate accommodation. Most upmarket ships offer a four-star plus experience which compares well to hotels.

Although MICE/Charter agents often dismiss the idea of a cruise ship as a venue for their conference or incentive event, this dismissal may be based on the perception



SONIA LIMBRICK

UK business development manager,
Azamara Club Cruises

that voyage durations are either too long or conference meeting rooms and lecture spaces unsuitable. They might even wonder how the mix of leisure and business guest would work alongside each other.

In fact, it can work in pretty much in the same way it works in any hotel be it large or small depending on the size of the group.

As many cruise lines now offer a more inclusive on board proposition, this can make budget planning easier and be a more cost effective option for their clients.

One of the most attractive USPs for any conference or group planner is that on board a cruise ship, delegates can be kept together.

Many MICE/Charter events also tend to bring delegates to the event from many countries and locations around the world. Again, as ships visit so many cities and ports worldwide, the availability and ease of joining one can also work well.

Azamara Club Cruises has been very successful working with trade partners globally on the leisure side. My role as UK business development manager has grown to deal with wider audiences such as the MICE market. I am focused on new routes to business and keen to develop relationships with MICE agents in the UK and Ireland.

Since the global brand Azamara Club Cruises was launched in 2010, it has developed a healthy charter business which is headed by Bruce Setloff. He likes to use the catchphrase "Charter is Smarter". Which of course it can be, when clients are looking to hold an event hosting more than 500 guests.

The company is owned by Royal Caribbean Cruise Line, which owns some of the largest ships in the world and have world class and state of the art facilities on board. Therefore, from Azamara Club Cruises' two small boutiques ships holding 680 guests on a full ship charter, to Royal Caribbean's Anthem of the Seas, there's onboard meeting spaces available for everyone. [📍](#)



CAPTAIN GREYBEARD
JOHN HONEYWELL
editor, World of Cruising

HIGH PRICE TO PAY WHEN LAUNCHING A NEW SHIP

Cruise ship launches are lavish affairs. And why not? When you have spent maybe half a billion pounds building a vessel that is going to be carrying paying passengers for 30 years or more, it's worth investing in some extravagant hospitality to get things off to a good start.

I'm not just talking about the christening ceremonies, with big names, headline entertainment, and sumptuous banquets. The pre-inaugural events are where the really big money goes. There's usually one or two cruises for invited guests - travel agents, media, loyal passengers, and trade partners - all provided with accommodation, entertainment, food ... and drink ... for FREE.

There's often a fireworks display, and special performers drafted in - West End star Michael Ball, for example, on P&O Cruises' Britannia recently. Anthem of the Seas arrived in Southampton for a week of events last month - including two two-day cruises to nowhere, packed with travel agent guests - before setting out on her real maiden voyage.

When Royal Caribbean launched Oasis and Allure of the Seas, they flew guests from around the world to Fort Lauderdale to spend consecutive Thanksgiving Days on the ships - those from the US had been aboard a couple of days earlier so they could still enjoy the holiday with their families. It all pays off in the acres of coverage in print and online, and the hours of TV programming devoted to the new ship. The more the merrier ... and even competitor companies benefit from the raised profile of cruising generally.

But there is a hidden cost. While media guests can be trusted to drink in moderation, the same cannot always be said of agents, especially young staff taking advantage of a rare opportunity to leave their office counters behind for 24 or 48 hours.

One cruise line (whose blushes I will spare for the time being) was particularly horrified by the effects of hen party-like gangs of young ladies roaming newly-

carpeted corridors in the early hours - and the resultant clean-up operation before morning. Even then, attempts to ration the free drinks laddled out at the next event were largely unsuccessful.

Some try to ensure the visiting agents get to see more of the ship than just the bars and the smoking areas - organising treasure hunts and other events with the promise of cash, bonus points, or a free cruise. But that usually takes care of only the daylight hours. After dark, it's the Belles of St Trinian's all over again.

At one Southampton event to introduce a Royal Caribbean ship - I think it might have been Freedom of the Seas - I asked chairman Richard Fain how much his company was spending on the event; what it was

"After dark, it's the Belles of St Trinian's all over again."

costing to give thousands of guests free run of the ship, eating in all the restaurants and drinking the bars dry before paying passengers were allowed on board.

Naturally enough, he wouldn't say. An amiable chap with a sense of humour attuned to British tastes, he frequently hides behind stock market rules and regulations when avoiding saying anything he's not ready to say. On this occasion he glanced briefly at his right-hand man, Adam Goldstein, stared at the ceiling, wrung his hands, and simply said: "An unconscionable amount of money."

The phrase has remained with me ever since, and I was reminded of it recently by a news report on the "compensation" packages paid out to Royal Caribbean executives. Fain's annual salary was quoted at a relatively modest \$1 million. A bonus of \$2.2m, stock options totalling \$8.6m, and a few other almost insignificant perks took his grand total for 2014 to \$12m.

An unconscionable amount of money indeed. [⤵](#)

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PORTSIDE WITH...



 **JAMES COLE**
managing director, cruise
division, World Travel Holdings

Some say cruising is for the old, that it's boring and that customers are herded round like sheep. All I know is it's the best holiday experience IN THE WORLD.

There has never been a more exciting time for the cruise industry, as cruise lines like Royal Caribbean and P&O Cruises push the boundaries of what's possible with the launch of two of the most incredible ships ever to take to the seas – Britannia and Anthem of the Seas.

I was fortunate enough to be invited on the launch of both ships in the last couple of months.

P&O Cruises' Britannia is an incredible ship and features 13 different restaurants on-board. The company has enlisted the help of some of the world's most renowned celebrity chefs, to bring guests some of the finest cuisine at sea, as well as fabulous cookery classes where cruisers can hone their culinary skills.

What's more, the ship's opulent new Oasis Spa is the most luxurious wellness facility in the P&O Cruises fleet. The ship is the largest ever built for the British cruise market.

Royal Caribbean also took the cruise industry by storm with the launch of its latest ship Anthem of the Seas. This state-of-the-art vessel boasts a wealth of ground-breaking features and firsts at sea, bringing a whole new dimension to the cruise experience.

Some of her most cutting-edge features include the RipCord skydiving simulator, the North Star observation platform and the SeaPlex – the largest indoor activity space at sea.

The cruise line has also broken the mould when it comes to entertainment. The ship's Two70 venue magically transforms, offering panoramic views by day, before changing into a performance space by night. At the Bionic Bar, guests order their drinks on a personal tablet, before watching a robot create and serve them.

The ship has opened up a world of new possibilities for cruisers unlike anything that has ever been seen before. This ship has redefined cruising, harnessing new technologies and imaginative design.


Both cruise lines have played their part in showcasing the future of the cruise industry.

If you want a more traditional cruise experience, along with a British feel then go with Britannia. If you are looking for something that challenges every myth of cruising, something that will keep kids entertained like nowhere else at sea, then go with Anthem of the Seas. [↕](#)

"Both cruise lines have played their part in showcasing the future of the cruise industry."

STARBOARD WITH...



 **BERNARD CARTER**
managing director, EMEA,
Oceania Cruises

So, once again we find ourselves behind to the Germans... extra time, penalties...? Do not fear, by this time next year we should be back on top! The continued rise of the German cruise market – and the reduction in tonnage for the UK market meant that for the first time, in 2014 more Germans cruised than Brits. This will be reversed in 2015 as we see an increase once again in tonnage for the UK market – but what should excite us more is that the European cruise industry in general is getting stronger by the year and represents key growth opportunities for all cruise lines.

Yes, we are still seeing special promotions but today's offers are so much more imaginative, with additional onboard amenities – in short, if cruising historically offered good value it should now be a no-brainer. There is now a ship and product for everyone and numbers can only go in one direction as more people realise this.

The cruise industry has come so far in the last 10 years, with market-leading brands introducing ever more extravagant innovations – what we have today is a professional industry led by visionaries. The ability to move from concept to reality has been nothing short of stunning – after all, who would have thought we would ever be able to go ten-pin bowling, ice-skating or 'sky-dive' on board a ship?

As long as we, the professionals are careful to place clients on the right product the vast majority will become converts, extolling the virtues of cruising to friends, family – even total strangers via global internet review sites. Independent recommendation is amazingly powerful and with the rise in social media and consumer forums over recent years it is clear that engagement with our customers is a necessity.

People who book cruises like the idea of community. Travel agents too are entering the world of social media at an increasing pace – interacting and engaging their followers on anything from new promotions to special 'behind the scenes' reports and sought after 'exclusive' recipes.

We are at a very exciting time when the pace of change will only increase – with technology at the forefront. Not as some would say, a force against human contact but as a powerful tool to increase the breadth and depth of the travel agent/consumer relationship.

As our German cousins say ... "Vorsprung durch Technik" ... "Progress through Technology" [↕](#)



CRUISE DESTINATIONS GET INVOLVED IN CLIA SALES EFFORT



INDUSTRY INSIDER

DAVID SELBY

David Selby is a cruise industry management consultant and former managing director of Thomson Cruises

When at the helm of Thomson Cruises, it was fair to say that our guests typically knew more about the destinations than I did. I didn't get out nearly enough to really understand the places we offer and why they appeal to guests. All too often, I was strapped to the PC looking at sales, offers, prices and future planning. Therefore, I can only conclude that it must be even harder for travel agents to really understand what the different ports and destinations have to offer – after all, there are just so many. That's why it's good that so many destinations will be present at the CLIA UK Selling Cruise Conference this month.

Take Norway for example. In the four years Thomson Cruises cruised to Norway while I was there, I wasn't able to get to Norway once. I visited it nine times in the first two years after I left the company!

Norway is great for the UK Cruise industry. It is close, has over 60,000 miles of coastline (the world's 2nd longest) and is fast developing as a year-round cruise destination for Brits. With more than 40 ports and destinations, a cruise to Norway can include bustling modern cities, small rural fjord villages, the "midnight sun" or the northern lights. It also takes the environment very seriously. Despite its popularity, a number of ports limit the number of ship movements per day.

The majority of the ports belong to a marketing organisation called "Cruise Norway" which is one of

the destinations exhibiting at Southampton. This is just one of a number of initiatives in promoting the country to the cruise industry.

Two weeks after the conference, Cruise Norway will be back in London meeting the UK cruise lines' execs who are responsible for port operations, shore excursion planning and itineraries.

In September each year, Cruise Norway hosts a fam trip for cruise lines executives responsible for itineraries and shore excursions to visit a number of ports in a region of the country. And for the first time this year, a "Winter Wonderland" FAM trip was held in March, to highlight the growing year-round popularity of cruises to the north of the country – to places such as the North Cape, Alta, Tromsø, Narvik and Bodø.

Nearly 600,000 cruisers visited Norway last year – 1/3rd of them from the UK, its biggest market. This is around double the number of 10 years ago and is an important contributor to the economy, as each guest visits many ports on each cruise. It's easy to see why destination countries see the education of travel agents as important as cruise lines.

So when its CLIA Selling Cruise trade fair time, don't just visit the cruise lines. Take some time to visit the destination stands too. Last year I remember a number of Baltic Countries, as well as one or two from the Caribbean - and if you visit the Norway stand, you'll see me there too. Come and say "hello"! [👉](#)

ABOVE Bergen flyover

JAN W. LILLEBO

GET ON BOARD TO REALLY EXPERIENCE CRUISE SHIPS



INDEPENDENT VOICE

CLAIRE BRIGHTON

senior commercial manager for Advantage Travel Partnership

Over the last few months we have seen big ship launches from the likes of P&O and Royal Caribbean to the smaller launches such as Uniworld and between them all they have managed to get thousands of agents on board. There have also been other on board events from lines such as AMA Waterways/APT and Scenic that hundreds of agents were invited to attend. Each one of these launches or events were very different and I was lucky enough to attend some of these and on speaking to both Advantage members and other agents it was clear how much these events had benefitted them.

We are all very aware that no matter how great the training programmes are there is no substitute for actually experiencing the product. With all the different cruise options that are now available and within these sectors all the innovations that are available, it is even more key that agents are able to see and experience these products.

In general cruise lines are great at offering good numbers of ship visit places, particularly those who base their ships from the UK and aim to make these as regional as possible. I myself last week received ship visit places for our members from at least 5 different lines but are agents really making the most of these opportunities.

The ship visits are not just a 'free lunch', in advance of the visit it is key to either discuss with the member

of staff that is attending or set a plan for yourself of what your business needs to gain from the visit, looking to include gaining content to use in social media (take lots of pictures) and being able to come back to your business and train other members of the team that were unable to attend themselves meaning the whole team can sell confidently and increase your sales.

In addition to this, we are in a very fortunate position to be offered fam trip places by some of our cruise line partners and I know there are many others that benefit from these opportunities. I fully appreciate

"There is no substitute for actually experiencing the product."

that it is difficult for some agents to support these due to either funding or more often, staffing levels but I would encourage all agents to think twice before turning one of these fantastic opportunities down as they really are the best way of helping your staff understand the products fully and returning to the business with real knowledge about the ship, the staff and the service they received. So please don't think of this as 'wasted time' out of the office but as an amazing opportunity to get so much more for your business. [📍](#)



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