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WELCOME ABOARD

It seems like only yesterday I was putting the finishing touches to the last issue of World of Cruising and yet here we are again with another set of pages ready for the printer.

I hope you enjoy this one as much as my first at the helm. Thanks to those who wrote and emailed with your comments, and especially to Linda Marshall whose letter I have taken the liberty of publishing on Page 65. If I had my way, you would have a free subscription, Linda, but my MD says I have cost him enough money already!

In my guise as Captain Greybeard, I make no apology for returning to the subject of cruise ships on television (See Page 74). Except that even by mentioning it now it's beginning to feel like an apology.

The debate about the effect of Royal Princess's starring role in an ITV documentary series rolls on, as her sister ship prepares to be christened by the cast of an earlier TV series, The Love Boat.

Do cruise lines benefit from the exposure they receive from television, or do they suffer as producers exploit them – and their crews – for cheap entertainment?

We'd love to hear your views. Contact me at info@worldofcruisingmagazine.com

Best wishes,

John Honeywell

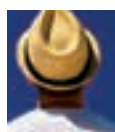
OUR CONTRIBUTORS



GARY BUCHANAN, our Contributing Editor, is one of cruising's most distinguished writers, contributing regularly to national newspapers, and the author of three books on the QE2. He was the winner of the Best River Cruise Feature category in this year's CLIA cruise journalism awards for his World of Cruising article on the Zambezi Queen.



JO FOLEY is a renowned author and journalist as well as our World of Spas editor, having previously edited Woman, Options, and The Observer magazine. She travels worldwide in search of the latest spa and beauty news and reports back on the most blissful hideaways to enjoy.



GREG BARBER likes to think of himself as an international man of mystery. He has Italian roots – some of which were once heavily tinted – and now spends most of his time jet-setting around the world, trying to shake off his paymasters and his creditors.



LESLEY BELLEW got hooked on adventure cruising in 2008 and now travels the globe chasing stories and sunshine. An award-winning journalist with more than 30 years' experience contributing to national, international and regional publications, she finds cruising the perfect way to indulge her passions for the arts, architecture, gardens, history and wildlife.



BARRY CAIN wrote about music during the heady days of punk, and recorded his experiences in the best-selling book 77 Sulphate Strip. He is currently ghost-writing the posthumous autobiography of Malcolm McLaren. A former editor of Cruise Trade News magazine, he is married with three sons and lives in north London.



DANIELLE FEAR, known to her blog readers as CruiseMiss, covers cruise from a younger and often solo perspective. With a background in sales until joining the cruise industry, Danielle is now a recognised blogger, freelance writer and social media professional covering all aspects of sea travel. In a poll conducted by USA Today she was one of only two British bloggers to figure in the Top 10.



STEVE NEWMAN is a keen champion of adventure and expedition eco-cruising and is the Digital Content Editor for World of Cruising. He helps run both of the magazine's blogs and assists with the Facebook page and websites. A former schoolteacher, he also provides illustrated features to a variety of newspapers and magazines.



ANTHONY NICHOLAS took his first cruise in 1981 and has written for The Scotsman, Independent, and The Sun, as well as a number of magazines. Based in the north-east of England, he also writes about hotels, rail journeys, and maritime history. His voyages have taken in everything from ultra-luxury boutique vessels to the most modern mega-ships.



SUSAN PARKER has been writing about cruise shipping for 20 years, for much of that time as editor of the highly-respected Lloyd's Cruise International. She has travelled extensively to destinations around the world and visited many of today's latest ships both on the water and while they were under construction.



CAROL WRIGHT is a former travel editor of House and Garden and has twice been chairman of the British Guild of Travel Writers. She has written 30 books on travel and food including the Cunard Cook Book. With a sea captain father, she grew up in the world of ships and loves exploring the world by sea.



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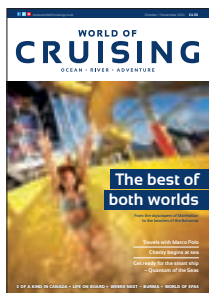
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Cruise Show

The grandest harbour of all





The Duchess of Cambridge was deprived of this magnificent view of Valletta Harbour when persistent morning sickness forced her to cancel a visit to Malta last month. She should have been representing Her Majesty The Queen at ceremonies to mark the 50th anniversary of the country's independence. The fortified walls and the domed roofs are a spectacular scene enjoyed by thousands of cruise ship passengers each year. **More details: Page 78**

WHO GOES THERE

About 300 cruise ships a year arrive in Valletta, bringing half a million passengers to the island of Malta. Celebrity, Costa, Crystal, Cunard, Fred. Olsen, MSC, P&O, Ponant, Princess, Regent, Royal Caribbean, Saga, Seabourn, Silversea, and Voyages of Discovery all have the destination on their itineraries

Britannia flies the biggest flag



It was a long time coming, from the first unveiling of the artist's impressions, to the start of painting initiated by two of the most senior executives in the cruise world - from both sides of the Atlantic. But the dramatic Union Flag bow of P&O's Britannia is finally complete and ready to be shown off in all its red, white and blue glory.

At 94 metres long, it is the world's largest contemporary version of the Union Flag and it has taken 420 litres of paint to complete - 320 litres of red and 180 litres of blue. Plus another 160 litres to create the bold P&O logo at the very front of the ship.

Florida's richest man, Micky Arison – chairman of P&O's parent company, Carnival Corporation – and David Dingle, chairman of Carnival UK (right) started the paint job. Also on board Britannia will be a Union Jack which used to fly on her namesake, the Royal Yacht Britannia, which was retired in 1997.

P&O's £500 million ship, under construction at a shipyard in north-east Italy, will arrive in Southampton in March, ready for a spectacular christening ceremony and a sold-out 14-night maiden voyage to the Mediterranean.



Pictures: JAMES MORGAN

Painting for charity

Passengers travelling on a Queen Mary 2 crossing to New York in November will have an opportunity to get their hands on a unique souvenir – an oil-painting of the ship actually created during the voyage.

Maritime artist Robert Lloyd – whose works hang prominently on all three Cunard Queens – will be in the ship's Grand Lobby every morning, working on the painting and answering questions from guests.

The work will be sold to the highest bidder on the last afternoon at sea, and proceeds will be donated to The Prince's Trust.

NEW restaurants for Thomson

Thomson Dream and Thomson Celebration will each get a new Asian-themed restaurant, Kora La, offering a la carte Indian and Chinese dinners, in a multi-million pound makeover for the two ships.

Dream's poolside burger bar, the Terrace Grill is also being upgraded, the ship's Argo lounge is to become a coffee bar, and Oceans Bar will be re-named Tides.



Armonia back in action

MSC Cruises will put its newly-stretched Armonia back into action with a 10-day cruise from Genoa to the Canaries. The ship went into dry-dock in Palermo, Sicily, last month to be cut in half for the insertion of a 24-metre centre section and the addition of 193 new cabins, plus extra public space and crew accommodation. The work will cost around £40 million and is to be repeated on three more of the company's ships.

Following the inaugural cruise, which departs on November 19, Armonia will sail alternating seven-night Canary itineraries with fares starting at £549 pp, including return flights from the UK.



BLOWING HOT AND COLD

Safety fears had passengers on Royal Caribbean's Independence of the Seas panicking last month when they suddenly found hairdryers had been removed from the cabins.

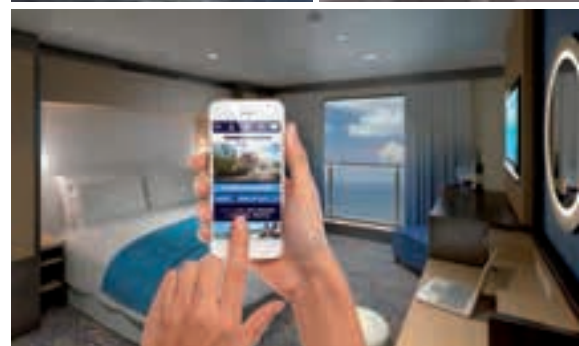
The company discovered its Aliseo brand of hairdryers were "incompatible with the ship's electrical system. Passengers were told: "We will be replacing all Aliseo hairdryers onboard the ship. In the meantime, we ask that you please not use the hairdryer in your cabin."

What's in a name?

It should not have come as too much of a surprise when Royal Caribbean announced that the third ship in the Quantum class will be Ovation of the Seas – the name was registered some time ago.

Anyone wanting to place a bet on what Quantum 4 or Oasis 3 might become could do worse than choose from Apex of the Seas, Spectrum of the Seas, Emblem, Harmony or Joy of the Seas – other names which have been registered as US trademarks.

**Quantum changes everything:
Page 31**



Dispel the myths and win a cruise

There are so many misconceptions about cruise holidays and cruise ships that it is difficult to know where to start when trying to convince new-to-cruise passengers to take their first steps up the gangway. At World of Cruising we already know that cruise offers the best value-for-money holiday there is, and we don't fall for any of the myths that seem to deter others.

In an attempt to dispel any lingering negativity, we are launching a competition for people who have NEVER travelled on a cruise ship. The prize? A cruise of course.

Working with accredited schools of journalism in the UK, we are inviting students to write a 450-word article on what they would EXPECT to find on board a cruise

ship. The winning writer will be able to take a friend or family member on a Mediterranean cruise during the 2015 Easter holidays.

The prize has been provided by MSC; Giles Hawke, their executive director for UK and Ireland will be one of the judges, together with Andy Harmer, director of CLIA UK & Ireland, Simone Clark, MD of Iglu and Planet Cruise, and John Honeywell, editor of World of Cruising.

After taking their prize cruise, the winner will write a feature for publication in World of Cruising.

Watch this space.



Shore thing

Another 20 ports will be added to destinations offered by CruisingExcursions.com next year.

Alicante, Genoa, Ibiza, Korcula (Croatia) Leixoes (Portugal) and Reykjavik are some of the new ports. A Ferrari drive on the French Riviera, snorkelling in Barbados, and a Segway tour of Amsterdam will be among the trips to be provided.

The company claims its shore excursions – sold online and through a number of High Street travel agents - are up to 60 per cent cheaper than those provided by cruise lines.

See Going Ashore: Page 12

Could a river cruise be any more inclusive?



When Titan talk about “all-inclusive” tours, they mean pretty much just that – from the moment you lock your front door behind you to the minute you return.

Only one thing is needed to complete the picture – a “welcome home” shopping basket with fresh milk, bread, and anything else required for an easy supper.

Take the 14-day European Serenade itinerary from Vienna to Amsterdam on board the River Queen (left). The £3,229 fare includes flights, transfers, unlimited drinks and all gratuities on board, plus a choice of excursions, and free WiFi on board.

All this plus Titan’s award-winning VIP home departure service to the airport.

The cruise, along with others on Uniworld ships throughout Europe and on the Mekong and in Russia, features in Titan’s new 2015 brochure.

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DESTINATION NEWS



Guernsey growth

The Channel island of Guernsey has seen a 45 per cent increase in cruise ship arrivals in the past two years and is predicting even better numbers next year.

There were 90 visiting ships this year, bringing 96,134 passengers between January and August. Full-year figures are expected to beat last year's total of 110,040.

Royal Caribbean's Anthem of the Seas, P&O's Britannia, and Celebrity Silhouette will help to boost 2015 figures.

And all this without a quay for the ships to berth – passengers come ashore by tender, which can be a problem in high winds.

Desert island risks



A new cruise terminal, unveiled at the Seatrade Med conference in Barcelona last month, will open in the Gulf port of Abu Dhabi in 2016. The capital of the United Arab Emirates plans to match the facilities at neighboring Dubai, which currently handles most of the cruise turnarounds for the region.

Abu Dhabi – which will soon see the opening of satellite museums for The Louvre and the Guggenheim, is also developing a desert island beach resort exclusively for cruise visitors.

Terminal case for Hull?

The city of Hull, preparing for its spell in the limelight as UK City of Culture in 2017, is hoping to build a £17 million terminal to attract more cruise ship visitors.

The local council has already agreed to spend £380,000 on initial studies for the development. Cruise & Maritime Voyages and Fred Olsen are among operators already sailing from the east coast port;



GOING ASHORE

Which is the better buy – ship’s tour or private excursion?

Shore excursions are a multi-million pound business so Tripadvisor’s move to acquire tour giant Viator signals independent operators are gunning for a greater piece of the action by tempting savvy cruisers to book tours with them rather than the cruise lines. **LESLEY BELLEW** explores how it all stacks up.

The gloves are off. Third party excursion companies are increasingly on the attack and muscling in on the cruise destination tours market.

Gone are the days when passengers signed up for their ship’s tour offerings without a second glance.

The internet has changed all that. Passengers can research the destinations and explore opportunities for cut-price deals, bespoke or small party tours and alternative adventure activities.

Viator is the biggest player in the

market, covering 1,500 destinations and offering 20,000 tours.

Tripadvisor has made a sharp move to buy the firm for \$200m and in turn create a ‘bait and switch’ strategy; visitors check out reviews on Tripadvisor and will be tempted to buy tours through a link on its website, potentially locking out competitors.

Barrie Seidenberg, chief executive and president of Viator, said:

“For far too long passengers have been beholden to cruise lines for



shore excursions that are often over-priced, over-crowded and represent only a fraction of what is available locally.”

He added: “Viator’s shore excursions are run by the best local tour operators and handpicked to ensure value, quality and service. Our Worry-Free Guarantee provides travellers with the peace of mind they will return to port well in advance of their ship’s departure. Our customers have never missed their departure. If they did, Viator would provide transport to the ship’s next port-of-call.”

Despite such competition, the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) is confident cruise ships’ excursions will continue to be the No. 1 option for passengers. Andy Harmer, Director of CLIA UK & Ireland, said: “The cruise industry offers a huge choice of tours at the many destinations it serves across the globe. The cruise lines are continually evolving the choice of tours to provide passengers with a real taste of each destination, and represent excellent value for money. We are confident that these tours will remain the preference for cruise ship passengers.”

Viator is not the only fast-moving company – there are plenty of other shore excursion firms seeing huge growth. They include cruisingexcursions.com which was launched three years ago with 240 European destinations at 60 Mediterranean ports and has already increased its offering to more than 10,000 tours at more than 700 ports worldwide.

Do your homework to bag a deal

Serious homework is the only way for guests to navigate through the myriad of tour options to bag the best deals. There are no shortcuts. Families and friends travelling together can find attractive discounts by clubbing together to hire a minibus or car for the day instead of paying individually on a cruise line’s coach.

Duncan and Louise Starkey, from Yorkshire, are well-travelled although only recently converted to regular cruising. They used the cruisecritic.co.uk message board to contact other passengers on a cruise to the Baltic, with a view to share the cost of an alternative excursion. After ‘many hours of research’ they booked through alla-tour.com for their St Petersburg excursion. Louise said: “In the end there were 10 of us and the whole experience was excellent. Alla, winner of a Tripadvisor 2014 certificate of excellence, has a visa waiver arrangement and we booked for two days. We saw much more than if we had tried to find the places ourselves. We also got into places early – before they opened to the public.”

Duncan and Louise, who have recently retired, describe themselves as ‘adventurous but careful’. Louise said: “If we are in a remote area of say, Indonesia, and there are potential problems with translation or difficult roads, we will stick to the cruise tour. But we prefer going off on our own, so in places like Northern Europe we will hire a car for the day. It usually works out about £100 between us and that is cheaper than a day’s cruise tour, plus we have the flexibility to explore.”

“The thought of missing the ship leaves me cold”

Other passengers are more cautious. Andy and Carole McQuaker, from Lee, in south-east London, take a cruise once a year and usually choose one of Princess Cruises smaller vessels. Carole, 56, said she is always content with the ships’ excursions. She said: “I would be really nervous to go off with an unknown company and risk being late. The thought of missing the ship leaves me cold. Even if other shore-side companies undercut the price I would not be interested.”

Karen Mclean, 48, a nurse from Widnes, recently travelled on Fred. Olsen’s Boudicca to Iceland and said she was happy to take the ship’s tours as they appeared to be ‘pretty good value’. She said: “As I travel on my own, I like company, so a coachload of people is fine with me.” She added: “The four-hour whale-watching trip I booked was £85 compared to €65 for the people who walked to the whale watching booking office at the port and booked independently.”

How to secure the best-value tours

- Check whether admission prices are included
- Ensure you will be refunded if your ship cannot dock
- Book a guide who speaks your language
- Consider how many people will be in your group – the more people, usually the lower the price
- Check out the insurance
- Think about the location, what might be simple in Europe might not be in the Far East
- Will the ship wait if you are late?

Remember to:

- Take your passport.
Carry local currency
- Know your ship's departure time
- Synchronise your watch with the ship



With a slogan 'Prices lower than cruise lines' it also offers to match, and discount by 10 per cent, any excursion found elsewhere. Its website allows visitors to search by their ship's name and departure date to 'save up to 60 per cent on multishore excursion packages'. The ABTA member also pledges to get passengers back to their ship on time; provides full insurance and a refund if a ship is unable to dock at a destination.

The Shore Excursions Group (shoreexcursions.com) focuses exclusively on port excursions. It is owned by Bradford J. Miller, a former Abercrombie & Kent executive, and Michael Bonner, who has worked in a variety of roles for Royal Caribbean and Viking River Cruises. The group offers cultural, scenic, active and city tours and is confident of the quality of its excursions, the people delivering them and the overall focus on exceptional experiences. Its website states: "If guests are in

any way dissatisfied with the experience, we will work hard to resolve concerns, up to and including a full refund of your tour price."

Husband and wife team Barrie and Julie Karp run shoretrips.com and offer more than 3,000 day activities and sightseeing tours. The couple, from Milwaukee, have been in the travel business for decades and have visited every site from where their tours depart. The company is particularly strong in the Caribbean, which accounts for almost half of its bookings. Julie said: "Ships today are often huge floating hotels and with 4,000 people exiting at the same time is not fun and that is why we started ShoreTrips."

Companies that sell cruise excursions would not survive if their customers kept missing their ships. If your ship is offering tours you want to do, at a price you are happy to pay, I suggest you book them. If you want to save

money and get some other ideas of what to do in each port, do a little research online."

Boutique company myexcursions.com was founded in 2005 by UK cruise industry veteran Tim Harwood. Tim, from Kent, is now based in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He and his wife Dinora offer only private, exclusive and custom excursions from cruise ports around the world. They deal with 1,000 to 2,000 guests a year and there are no prices on the website as, Tim says, "each programme is customised to the specific number of guests and their desired programmes".

With such strong third party competition for cruise shore excursions, passengers look set to be the overall winners – they can put pressure on cruises lines to offer keen prices and quality tours – or they will look elsewhere. //

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The best of both worlds

From the skyscrapers of Manhattan to the beaches of the Bahamas, it's fun, fun, fun all the way as **BARRY CAIN** pounds the pavements of New York before taking a Carnival cruise to the sun



The pavements in Manhattan are the hardest in the world. They have to be to withstand the weight of those frozen tornados disguised as skyscrapers. The terra has never been so firma.

After pounding those ineffable streets in search of the American Dream, the body yearns for something more yielding, something that delights the spirit rather than the intellect. Hold up, isn't that Carnival Splendor sittin' on the dock of the bay ready to whisk you away from all that concrete and clay for a magic carpet ride down to The Bahamas and back?

And you really will have fun, fun, fun 'til your daddy takes the T-Bird away.

That's the general idea and Carnival stick to it rigidly and unashamedly. I guess you have to when the whole shebang is billed as a 'fun cruise'. Frivolity abounds. During the days at sea – there were four of them with three days in the Eastern Caribbean sandwiched in between

– the entertainment included a family scavenger hunt, a hairy chest competition, a ladies' pamper party, a gender showdown, 'awesome' karaoke, secrets to a flatter stomach, a limbo competition and a string toss tournament.

You get the picture? 'Yes we do!' cried the 3,127 Americans on board, nearly all living within a 10 hour drive of Manhattan, according to Nickos D. Basistatos, who's been Hotel Director on Splendor for six years. 'Usually the furthest places guests come from are Ohio, Illinois, Pennsylvania and Connecticut,' he told me.

A name like Splendor takes a lot of living up to if you come from New Jersey. But if you're from New Malden it's just the name of an 113,000 ton ship without the lavish connotation. It's six years old and was actually christened in the UK by Myleene Klass; it has been eclipsed in some areas by Carnival's very own Dream Klass, sorry, Class. But the new kids on the block have simply tweaked a few trinkets,

tied a few bows, splashed a few thrills.

And hey, that's me, atop the Empire State, catching a glimpse of the future. That's me again, in Grand Turk, swimming alongside Splendor just yards away from the pearly white beach.

And the frozen Margaritas in Jimmy Buffett's bar are something else. There I am, after a beach barbecue, lounging in paradise on the private island of Half Moon Cay, feeling like I'm 2,000 light years from home. Look, it's me, sauntering along Bay Street in downtown funky Nassau checking out the limos and rum cake. And yep, me again, watching the World Cup Final live on a giant screen in the middle of the sea, my feet in the pool, my mind elsewhere, grappling with the enigma that is Roy Hodgson and why he's getting paid £3.5 million a year.

This best of both worlds experience makes for one of the great cruise and stay vacations, but it's essential to do the stay bit first. Walking the



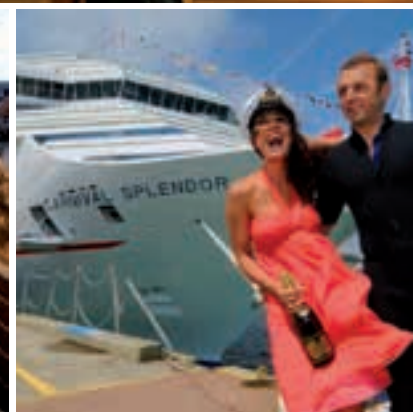
decks of Splendor after a Manhattan surf-in' safari is like stepping off those hot, hard pavements onto sand so fine it doesn't cling to your feet. That good.

If you've never been to New York, go. You're depriving yourself of one helluva jaw-dropping experience. If you've been, go again, you'll get a lot more for your pound this time around and it's still one helluva jaw-dropping experience.

I stayed at the Intercontinental, 37 floors of style in the best possible location if you want to be near the action but not hear it. It's a one-minute stroll to the new family-friendly Times Square where ads the size of skyscrapers lit up the night. When it rained, and boy did it rain, I felt like Harrison Ford in *Bladerunner*. There, before me, through that tropical thunderstorm, was the face of Sean Bean, 50 stories high, advertising a new TV show. This truly was the shape of things to come.

Time to hit that cruise button. Hard.

Splendor has a New York state of mind – a colossal stick of Coney Island rock, sweet and satisfying. It's the ship that doesn't sleep – complimentary room service is available 24 hours a day as are freshly cooked pizzas, coffee, tea, the best lemonade you'll ever taste at sea, water, ice cream and frozen yogurt, all up on Lido Deck 9 where movies are shown on a giant screen until the early hours. The casino was constantly buzzing – I heard someone won \$140,000 at roulette and then lost it all within an hour.



FACTFILE

CARNIVAL SPLENDOR – ON-BOARD COSTS

Basics	Bottle of beer \$4.95, glass of wine \$5.95, cocktail of the day \$8.95
Laundry	One shirt \$4
Speciality restaurant	\$35 pp cover charge for the steakhouse
Spa	Facial \$112, massage \$135 for 50 minutes (but watch for special offers). Shampoo and finish \$35.
Internet	75 cents p minute, 480 minutes \$159.
Tips	\$11.50 p day added to onboard accounts. 15 per cent service charge added to bar bills.

Clockwise from top:

The city streets don't come much harder than those in New York's Times Square; Mylene Klass and a Royal Navy diver at the ship's christening ceremony in Dover; family brunch in the sun



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SWITCH
ON FUN



Clockwise from top left: Kids – and parents – love the lively Carnival Waterworks; horse-riding on the beach is a favourite activity at Half Moon Cay; relax with a cocktail of the day, every day



FACTFILE

CARNIVAL SPLENDOR

Length	951 ft
Passenger decks	13
Passengers	2,974
Crew	1,150
Cabins	1,487
Cruise details	10 nights New York – Caribbean Fly Cruise from £1,499pp. New York, Grand Turk, Half Moon Cay The Bahamas, Nassau, The Bahamas, New York. Prices are per person based on two adults with flights from Heathrow and also include a pre-cruise hotel stay. Based on the Carnival Splendor 8-night cruise departing 16 October 2014.

www.carnival.co.uk

Oh well, he, or she, could always cheer themselves up next door in the Punchliner, the bluest comedy club on the high seas where, just for a change, food wasn't the most frequently used 'f' word.

Cruise food is as big and brassy as the ships that dish it up and Splendor's fare doesn't disappoint. The Lido deck lunch buffet is culinary heaven. Apart from the usual daily theme menu there's a Mongolian Wok, a Tandoori station with real clay ovens, a Burrito bar, a hamburger and hot dog stand, a deli with hot pastrami on rye, a rotisserie and the aforementioned pizza place. Doing the Lido shuffle every day is like queuing up at an eatery on 8th Avenue, but that only makes the hot dogs taste more authentic.

The Black and Gold Pearl restaurants provide waiter service with two traditional dinner sittings plus an anytime dining option between 5.45 and 9.30pm. There are two 'elegant' nights, but I only saw a few guys in tuxedos. This was the school holidays so it was bound to have a more casual feel. The Pinnacle Steakhouse is the only restaurant to have a cover charge, at \$35 per person. Some of the steaks are not for the fainthearted – 18oz prime rib – and the cheesecake is as big as life itself.

Drinks are great value. I kid you not, a huge Long Island Iced Tea for about a fiver. That's a good 10 quid cheaper than a cocktail bar in any city in the UK. Watch out – you've got to be 21 to drink alcohol, anathema to a guy fresh out of A Levels or a girl in her second year at uni.

And honest, guv, you can take the kids, the older the better I guess because it really is a game of two halves if you're coming from the UK. After sharing ten packets of jaw drops with them amongst those Manhattan monoliths, they'll find themselves actually hanging out on board with dudes their own age from the Bronx and Brooklyn and Queens all taking a break from the city heat. How cool is that? There were only 27 Brits on the cruise including myself and my wife, Dina, who I love very much (she told me to say that) so their accent will be adored.

Splendor is fully geared-up for a juvenile onslaught; Carnival are past masters in the art of adolescence organisation. Each age group has its own snazzy hangout – Camp Carnival is a fully kitted 5,500-square-foot playroom where age groups for supervised activities are 2-5, 6-8 and 9-11. Babysitting services are available in the playroom from 10 p.m. until 3 a.m. and during specified hours on port days. Circle 'C' is a club exclusively for 12-14 year-olds and features gaming consoles, late-night movies and a state-of-the-art sound system, while the ultra-cool Club O2 serves 15-17-year-olds.

Parents get to have time in the day to remember how things used to be, before the nappies and the tantrums and the teenage kicks right through the night. Check out the Cloud 9 Spa – one of the largest at sea – where time stands still. A day pass costs \$40 per person and an eight-day pass is \$268 per couple.

I'm not a show man. For me, the entertainment on offer in the main theatres at sea is all very professional but a little uninspired. The Spectacular Theatre shows

were no better and certainly no worse than all the rest. But judging by the enthusiastic reaction from the audience every night, my view was very much in the minority.

The excursions were mainly beach-based, offering the chance to swim with dolphins in Nassau and ride horses along the shore in Half Moon Cay. You can book them through the TV in your stateroom. Our balcony stateroom was very roomy. Mind you, it had to be to fit in the huge bed. Dina and I slept so far apart she became a distant memory. But we fell in love again (she told me to say that too). Smoking was permitted on the balcony and in designated areas of the ship.

We met one British couple, Liliana and Len Malla from Birmingham, who appeared to be having the time of their lives. 'The ship is luxurious and the service generally is very good,' said Len. 'I love the two days at sea before reaching the Bahamas and the two days at sea going back. The organisation really cannot be faulted.' One tip from Len. 'Get the Priority Boarding, saves a lot of time queuing.'

This 8-Day Exotic Eastern Caribbean cruise, coupled with the New York stay, is seriously verging on Brit bucket list territory if you hit it right.

Alas, when the Carnival is over and the ship finally drops anchor back at 12th Avenue and 55th, there's your daddy, waiting to take your T Bird away... //



Queen Mary 2 makes an impression every time she arrives in New York harbour

Into a New York state of mind

There's all the time in the world but it still isn't enough to fit everything in during a crossing on board Queen Mary 2. **JOHN HONEYWELL** reports

After a week at sea on board the magnificent Queen Mary 2, the arrival into New York harbour is all about getting the timing right. Trust me to get it wrong.

The previous afternoon, Captain Kevin Oprey had announced that he expected to be picking up the local pilot from Sandy Hook Pilot Station at about 3.45am and that we would be passing under the Verrazano Narrows suspension bridge – linking Brooklyn and Staten Island – about 45 minutes later. Watching the ship squeeze under the structure that had such an influence on QM2 design by limiting the

height of the funnel is an opportunity not to be missed.

So my alarm was set for 4.15, allowing ample time to get from bed to balcony, camera in hand. Just one thing – I should have realised it would be dark. Pitch black, in fact. Sunrise was not until 5.35am. There was nothing to see apart from a winking red light in the far distance. A check on the black screen of the bridge cam broadcast confirmed my assumption that we were running behind schedule. Time for a quick bathroom break to prepare for a busy day ahead. Washed and scrubbed, I emerged

about five minutes later to be greeted by my son rubbing his hands as vigorously as Uriah Heep and declaring "Right, that's the bridge done!" I had missed it, and all I have to remind me of the moment are the pictures that Nick took.

This Transatlantic voyage in May, designated as QM2's 10th Anniversary Crossing was the fourth time I had arrived in New York by sea, but still just as memorable as the first.

No wonder bleary-eyed passengers throng the open decks, whatever

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- **Camp Ocean*** - Carnival is proud to unveil Camp Ocean - an exciting, new marine-themed children's programme, currently available on Carnival Freedom. Camp Ocean, which will replace the existing Camp Carnival programme, will welcome youngsters in with light blue and white underwater coloured spaces and friendly, experienced staff. Three age-related categories will each have their own identity: children ages 2-5 will be dubbed "Penguins," with those ages 6-8 called "Sting Rays" while 9-11 year olds will be "Sharks."
- **Seuss at Sea*** - The Seuss at Sea programme will offer a variety of exciting and immersive onboard youth, family, dining and entertainment experiences featuring the amazing world and words of Dr. Seuss. From the whimsical and always wonderful world of Dr. Seuss comes Cats in Hats, Fish Red and Blue, and both kinds of Things — 1 and 2. And they're all coming to a Carnival cruise near you with Seuss At Sea!

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*Camp Ocean is currently available on Carnival Freedom only.

*Seuss at Sea is available on Carnival Breeze, Carnival Splendor, Carnival Sunshine and Carnival Freedom.

the weather and whatever the time, to make the most of the moment.

The Statue of Liberty stands ready to welcome visitors, as she has since 1886, but on this occasion I really wanted to catch my first view of the Freedom Tower, which now stands in place of the twin towers of the World Trade Centre. But like much of Manhattan's Financial District its upper levels were hidden behind low clouds and I had to be content with a glimpse of Governor's Island as Queen Mary 2 was spun round to reverse into her berth at Red Hook, Brooklyn.

Before we disembark though, what about the crossing? Well, it began in a pretty special way. It's not every day that the Duke of Edinburgh drops in for lunch to send us on our way. But that's what happened as guests assembled on a May morning in Southampton.

“Once the ceremonials were out of the way, it was down to business. Nobody had told the weather that, with such a celebrated cast list for the crossing, it ought to be on its best behaviour.”

Although the 10th anniversary of QM2's maiden voyage was actually back in January, she had been on a world cruise since then and this was her first crossing of the year. Sister ships Queen Victoria and Queen Elizabeth had led the Cunard flagship up Southampton Water earlier in the day, and a 10-minute firework display marked our departure.

The passenger list for this 214th crossing was packed with distinguished names. There was Commander Ron Warwick, former master of the ship; Stephen Payne, the man who designed the vessel (and who had to wrestle with plans for the funnel in order to be able to negotiate the Verrazano Narrows Bridge). And there was Maureen Ryan, for many years a social hostess on Cunard ships. Each of them entertained packed houses in the Royal Court Theatre and the Illuminations Planetarium with their reminiscences. Maureen was particularly amusing when recalling her days as a telephone operator at a time when there was a branch of the Midland Bank on board ship, transatlantic flights were in their infancy, and the advertising slogan was "You Can Work Harder On A Cunarder." For those travelling for pleasure rather than business, she confided, the daily programme would contain information such as "Miss Sayers will effect introductions in the Card Room."

Also making the crossing were many QM2 regulars including one – New York art dealer Richard Faber – who at the age of 76 has travelled on the ship 49 times, and was the first passenger up the gangway on that maiden voyage in 2004.

Once the ceremonials were out of the way, it was down to business. Nobody had told the weather that, with such a celebrated cast list for the crossing, it ought to be on its best behaviour. A westerly gale blew at a steady 40 knots and the

open decks were closed to passengers as heavy seas tried to toss the ship around like a bathtub toy. QM2 shuddered and juddered as shock waves ran along the 1,132 feet from bow to stern. Then she steadied herself, gave a little shake of the shoulders, and headed forward at a stately 15.2 knots – just about half her design speed of 30 knots, about 35mph.

We were going to have to speed up as the weather improved and the days wore on, especially as a combination of the weather and the threat of drifting ice led Capt Oprey to take us further south. In the circumstances, it was perhaps brave of Stephen Payne to open his lecture programme with a tribute to Titanic before delivering his party-piece on "The Genesis of a Queen" a day later. It's a talk he has given many times around the world, but it was a special moment when he presented it to 1,000 passengers on board his own creation. Nobody could have been surprised to hear his voice crack with emotion as he paid tribute to "the greatest passenger ship in the world."

To anyone who fears they would die of boredom on a seven-night crossing, without a single port of call and the added bonus of five 25-hour days as the clocks change, I can only say that even with all the time in the world there still isn't enough to fit in a fraction of the activities available.

To take just a small sample from the ship's daily programme, there were classes for everything from bridge to ballroom dancing, watercolour painting to Photoshop, and from scarf-tying to iPads. Passengers with an interest in anything from needlework to Mahjong could meet to share advice and experiences, while for those with a competitive edge there were countless trivia quizzes, and games of darts, cricket and carpet bowls. The guest speakers also included Eats Shoots and Leaves author Lynn



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The Statue of Liberty welcomes Queen Mary 2, as she has welcomed arrivals to New York since 1886.

Truss – I hope she didn't see the notice pointing the way to the "Officer's Cocktail's" – and there were more pianists, harpists and string ensembles than you could shake a conductor's baton at. RADA even had a troupe of actors on board presenting a potted version of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*.

The only anachronism of this very British institution remains the fact that on-board prices for drinks, photographs, spa treatments and the rest, are in US dollars instead of £ sterling. Still, I suppose it's good preparation for the arrival in

New York. Which brings us back to that final morning as the ship tied up at Red Hook, Brooklyn.

All too soon, breakfast was over and the scramble for disembarkation began. Immigration formalities quickly completed, I was heading for the bright lights of Times Square. A few days of hectic sightseeing beckoned, with the help of a \$109 New York CityPass which gave discounted admission to attractions such as the Empire State Building, Metropolitan Museum of Art, MoMA, and the Guggenheim Museum.

I also enjoyed a walk along New York's finest new free attraction, The High Line – an oasis of greenery created out of a disused elevated railway in the Chelsea district.

It would be a couple of days before I got my first proper view of the Freedom Tower, from the window of my 25th-floor room at the Affinia Manhattan hotel, across the street from Pennsylvania Station and Madison Square Garden. I'm already looking forward to another chance to see it properly, in daylight and not shrouded in cloud, on my next arrival in New York harbour. //

A large cruise ship, the Marco Polo, is docked at a pier in a fjord. The ship is white with a blue hull and a red stripe. The name "MARCO POLO" is visible on the side. The background features steep, rocky mountains with patches of snow under a clear blue sky. The foreground is filled with dark, wet rocks.

Travels with Marco Polo

Venerable cruise ship Marco Polo takes **ANTHONY NICHOLAS** on a journey back in time, to an era when just being at sea was considered more than enough to entertain

Eidjord at first light. Rolling mountains stand black and massive on both sides, reflected on the glass-calm, silver sheen of the fjord.

On the shore, cars scurry in and out of granite tunnels like tiny beetles. Small boats sit tethered to the rocky edges like flies frozen in amber. A sea of lush green meadows stretches as far as the eye can see.

Marco Polo looks like some trim, tidy work of abstract art, improbable and yet undeniably real. The small, perfectly-formed ship is obviously the product of another place and time. Smoke curls lazily from her single funnel. The sharp, raked bow and the slightly upturned stern make the ship look like a long, lazy smile. The superstructure is low, snow white, and balcony-free.

Eidjord was the first stop on an eight-day, high summer cruise to the Norwegian fjords from London's port of Tilbury. Marco Polo is a million miles removed from the modern, state-of-the-art floating resorts that populate these same waters each summer.

A major difference is that none of our 800 passengers are children. Marco Polo is an adults only ship. At just 22,000 tons, this small, intimate gem simply lacks the facilities. No, our passengers are very much an older, all-British crowd. People who like sailing on a well run, comfortable ship at a reasonable price, without the hassle involved in passing through airports. For them, the size and easy accessibility that a ship like Marco Polo provides make for a far easier, gentler kind of summer holiday. The cruise was completely full.

Built in 1965 as a Russian liner named the Aleksandr Pushkin, the ship ran for many years on the Leningrad to Montreal run. In 1991, Gerry Herrod bought the vessel for his nascent Orient Lines. In his own words, the entire ship was gutted 'like an avocado'. Only the original

engines and the specially ice-strengthened hull remained.

The rebuilt Marco Polo soon gained a reputation for elegant, adventurous expedition cruising. With a series of new, curved terraces added to her stern, embracing an outdoor buffet and a new, larger pool, the ship was redecorated in bow-to-stern Art Deco. Painted, stained glass ceilings, steel and leather bar stools and elegant Balinese statuary gave the ship a rich, raffish feel. A trio of upper deck hot tubs provided arguably the best overall vistas on any ship afloat. They still do.

My upper deck cabin featured a pair of fixed single beds, a plasma screen television that I never once got to watch, more than enough wardrobe and drawer space, and a powerful shower. The wardrobe area also contains a small safe, but there are no tea and coffee making facilities. With a couple of decent-sized picture windows, this room was a comfortable little home away from home.

Being a 'lady of a certain age', Marco Polo has some of the quirky foibles of any liner converted into a cruise ship. Three main staircases provide access to most of the public areas and cabins. With blue painted wrought iron balustrades, they point up the entire Art Deco theme quite beautifully, but they do take a bit of getting used to. There is also a quartet of small, busy lifts but, truth be told, the ship is so charmingly compact that getting anywhere on board is hardly a trek.

Down in the centre of the ship, the Waldorf Restaurant is the main dining room. With a flourish of floor-to-ceiling windows on each side and a beautiful, stained glass round ceiling as the centre point, the busy room serves breakfast and dinner in open seating and, as of our cruise, afternoon tea is also served here.

FACTFILE

Basics	Pint of beer £3.30 Glass of wine £5 Cocktail of the day £3.10 Speciality coffee £1.60
Laundry	One shirt or blouse £1.85
Spa	Cleansing facial £41, any massage £38 for 30 minutes, Shampoo and blow-dry £22
Internet	60p per minute 250 minutes £75
Tips	£5 pp per day charged to guest accounts (£4 p day on cruises of more than 16 nights)

FACTS AND FIGURES

Length	578 ft
Decks	8
Passengers	848
Crew	356
Cabins	425

Dinner is a traditional, two sitting affair, with menus tailored to the older British palate. There were two formal nights. On other evenings, the recommended code was jacket with or without tie, and the equivalent for the ladies. Buffet wise, the Lido is always busy. Table space, especially outside, is at a premium during lunchtime especially. That said, there are few things to match an al fresco breakfast deep in the snug splendour of a Norwegian fjord, with incredibly clear, sharp air and a side order of stunning scenery.

Inside, the main flow of public rooms runs from fore to aft on the central Magellan Deck. Right forward is the Marco Polo show lounge, spanning the full width of the ship. With a sit up bar at the far end of the room and a proscenium stage, this was the venue for nightly cabaret.



The Captain's Club is a nice venue for pre-dinner cocktails, and comes complete with a musical trio. Raffles is used mainly as a card and games room, while the lovely Columbus Club – formed from what was the casino – is adjacent to the Lido buffet. With comfortable seating and a secluded bar tucked into the corner, this is arguably the nicest part of the ship.

One deck up, and right aft, Scott's Club is the main after-dinner bar and lounge, hosting late night cabarets as well as the disco. But the crowning glory is the outdoor terrace, which seems to draw passengers like moths to a flame.

From here, a series of stepped terraces form sinuous curves right down to the stern. Sprinkled with tables and chairs on real teak decks, it was a spellbinding vantage point from which to watch the pine-shrouded Norwegian scenery slip by in the long light of a summer evening. There is also an upper deck gym. The upper deck hot tubs were especially popular during lazy days at sea; the deep hull of the Marco Polo shrugging off the long, rolling swells with almost effortless ease. If you need endless diversion, rock climbing walls and a casino the size of a zeppelin hangar, then

the Marco Polo is not for you. Instead, you find a smart, well run ship that is traditional in style, and small enough to access the sweet, smaller ports that bigger ships have to pass by.

Comfortable, welcoming, well fed and smartly served, the Marco Polo has charm, beauty, and more than a hint of sixties styling. A diminutive time capsule that takes you on two voyages at once; first, to a series of jaw-dropping ports of call, and secondly, back to a time when being at sea itself was considered more than enough to entertain. Real brass cabin keys, shuffleboard, and afternoon tea. They are all here.

Celebrating her 50th anniversary next year, this stout, soulful little ship is a joy to know. //

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Springtime Fjordland - 7 nights Saturday 18th April 2015

Marco Polo sails from London Tilbury

	1st Adult	2nd Adult
Twin Inner from	£939	£709
Twin Ocean View from	£1289	£969

Itinerary

London Tilbury - Amsterdam - Ulvik* cruising Hardangerfjord - Eidfjord Flâm - cruising Sognefjord - cruising Nærøyfjord to view Gudvangen Bergen - London Tilbury

Fjordland Splendour - 8 nights Thursday 30th April 2015

Azores sails from Bristol Avonmouth

	1st Adult	2nd Adult
Twin Inner from	£1099	£829
Twin Ocean View from	£1549	£1169

Itinerary

Bristol Avonmouth - Ulvik* - cruising Hardangerfjord - Eidfjord - cruising Sognefjord - Flâm - cruising Nærøyfjord to view Gudvangen - Bergen - Bristol Avonmouth

Summertime Fjordland - 6 nights Thursday 18th June 2015

Marco Polo sails from Newcastle Tyne

	1st Adult	2nd Adult
Twin Inner from	£959	£769
Twin Ocean View from	£1189	£959

Itinerary

Newcastle Tyne - Ulvik* - cruising Hardangerfjord - Eidfjord - Flâm cruising Sognefjord - Bergen Edinburgh Leith. **FREE** coach from Edinburgh Leith to Newcastle Tyne

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Left: View from the NorthStar
Right: Quantum's observation pod ride



Quantum changes everything

...and why sister ship Anthem of the Seas threatens to crush the opposition when she starts sailing from the UK.

By **GREG BARBER**

There's more to Quantum of the Seas than the first-of-a-kind sky-diving simulator and dodgem cars at sea – not to mention the gimmicks such as robot bartenders and full-sized 'virtual balconies' in every inside cabin.

Royal Caribbean's newest ship really does promise to live up to the bold slogan This Changes Everything. The 4,180-passenger vessel will make a brief visit to the UK at the end of October. Identical twin sister Anthem of the Seas will call Southampton its home for cruises to the Europe and the Med throughout next summer.


Anthem will be in direct competition with P&O's Britannia, launching in March and with a capacity of 3,600 passengers. Royal Caribbean chairman Richard Fain boasts:

"It's my objective to crush our competition in the UK market with Anthem.

"Having said that, any improvements are good for the whole industry. Oasis of the Seas was good for Royal, but the size of the ship and publicity around it improved overall demand and made other vacation companies up their game."

Among Royal's latest announcements is an exclusive deal with an internet satellite network to provide more bandwidth on Quantum than on all the other cruise ships in the world put together.

Unlike its predecessors, which have cavernous three-storey main dining rooms, the Quantum class vessels



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have four big venues. There's classic French cuisine in The Grande (where every night is formal night) comfort food in the American Icon Grill, bang up-to-date contemporary menus in Chic, and pan-Asian fusion favourites in Silk. Among the other 14 choices on board are a Jamie's Italian and a Johnny Rockets burger bar, plus pizzas, steaks, and a combination of Mediterranean and Californian cooking in Coastal Kitchen, which is reserved for guests staying in suites.

The headline show in Quantum's main theatre is a full-length version of West End Abba musical Mamma Mia! and Anthem will get the Queen tribute We Will Rock You.

I was taken on a guided tour of Quantum before it left the shipyard in Papenburg, Germany. Royal Caribbean chairman Richard Fain was inordinately proud of one seemingly bizarre addition – Big Red. It's a huge sculpture of a bear, the colour of a raspberry sorbet, and we had to walk between its legs to enter the SeaPlex complex which is home for the dodgems and also features a DJ booth on the end of a hydraulic arm, that will zoom over the heads of dacers.

In concept, it's somewhat similar to North Star – the observation pod ride that looks like it escaped from the London Eye, and which Fain hopes will not only be packed out during the day when passengers can ride for free, but will also be popular for exclusive events, even weddings.

The cocktail mixologists in the Bionic Bar may be robots, but they still expect to be tipped – Royal Caribbean vice-president Lisa Lutoff Perlo assured me the money will go into the crew benevolent fund. In another high-tech move, Quantum dispenses with ordinary cruise cards for unlocking cabin doors and paying for extras around the ship – passengers get a wrist-band which contains the technology required to

achieve everything remotely. They're a bit like an Oyster card worn as a Fitbit.

Tracking your luggage to see whether it has been delivered to your room needs another bit of kit – an app downloaded to your mobile phone. It will be interesting to see how many passengers can be bothered. I'm also looking forward to seeing if Royal's promise that it will take no more than 15 minutes to get through security and check-in to board the ship is achievable. I know it works in Fort Lauderdale – my arrival on Allure of the Seas was possibly even speedier - but anyone who has faced the queues and delays at Southampton might be a little sceptical.

No scepticism about one more Quantum innovation though. The virtual balconies – 80-inch HD screens in inside cabins, showing the view outside the ship real time – are stunning. The idea might not be completely new (Disney introduced "virtual portholes" on Dream and Fantasy) but the execution is totally realistic.

Thousands of people were hugely impressed as they gathered on the banks of the River Ems to watch Quantum make her 28-mile journey to the sea. Many thousands more will be even more amazed when they take a cruise on the ship in its maiden season. //

Clockwise from top: An inside cabin with its virtual balcony, entertainment venue Two70, a WOW wristband, dodgem cars in SkyPlex, the RipCord by iFLY sky-diving simulator



Quantum of the Seas will be sailing cruises of between 8 and 10 nights to the Caribbean from Cape Liberty, New Jersey, throughout the winter.

Fares from £850 pp (cruise-only).

In May the ship relocates to Shanghai, China to begin cruises to Japan and South Korea.

www.royalcaribbean.co.uk

Clockwise from top:
Setting foot on the earth's mantle at the UNESCO-listed Gros Morne national park; following in the footsteps of Captain Cook at Corner Brook; the port of St John's from the air (Barrett & MacKay Photo/Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism)



3

OF A KIND

Newfoundland & Labrador has a catch phrase, Cruise the Edge, which sums up this little-known gem on the eastern edge of Canada. Adventure Canada offers expedition cruises to this far-flung province which begin in a tiny French territory. Capital St John's is only five hours' flight from the UK and I can't recommend highly enough this land of cultural, historical and geological contrasts. By **SUSAN PARKER**



St John's

St John's is the oldest city in North America and the most easterly. Both piers are an easy walk into town with plenty to see in the local vicinity including The Rooms art gallery and museum. The cafe has fantastic views out over the city and harbour with homemade, organic, local fayre to tempt even the most disciplined.

It's a short bus ride to Signal Hill, where Marconi received the first transatlantic wireless signal from Cornwall. Nearby is the Johnson GEO Centre, a geological interpretation centre with an atmospheric exhibition on the Titanic.

With the Mayor Dennis O'Keefe an exponent of cruise, the city is geared up to welcome passengers whether it be the dockside welcome, the firing of the noon-day cannon on Signal Hill or the harbour symphony of ships' horns. St John's Ambassadors are on hand throughout the town to answer questions.

When we were in town icebergs were tracking their way south and so the obvious choice was a boat trip to get up close and personal, well not too close as they can turn turtle with little notice. Another option is to go diving with whales or guided kayak tours. Rick Stanley of Ocean Quest Adventures is the expert for all manner of waterborne tours.

Quidi Vidi Village, a fishing hamlet, is also within easy walking distance and home to restored 18th century Mallard Cottage where the menu changes daily. On offer are local wild game and seafood including dishes such as moose terrine with pickles and fish feed!

FACTFILE

Tourism

www.stjohns.ca

Population 107,000

Restaurants

Bacalao/Mallard Cottage/
Blue on Water

Saint-Pierre

Arriving in Saint-Pierre is like arriving in a mini France. A band decked out in Breton stripes including an accordion player serenaded us into one of two quays, both of which are about 20 minutes by foot from the town. Some lines choose to tender passengers downtown and bus tours leave directly from the ships.

A recommended first stop is for croissants and coffee at one of the cafes. We favoured Cyber Poly Gone Home which is just up from the tourist office. Try restaurants such as L'Atelier Gourmand but don't forget your euros.

This 26km² island can easily be visited in a call by hiring a taxi or taking a tour of the main sights. The residents with Basque, Breton, Normand and Arcadian roots date back to 1536.

Fishing has played a major role in the French territory's history and a short ferry ride to the Ile aux Marins, a thriving fishing village with 684 inhabitants in 1892, got my vote. Guide Jean-Pierre told us about the heyday of the Grand Bank and inshore fisheries as he guided us through the historical buildings, some of which have been restored. The last permanent residents left in 1965.

Prohibition also played its part in the 1920s when alcohol was supplied to the US. A two-hour guided tour including a visit to the Heritage Museum with its collection of bootlegger artefacts is on offer complete with stories, true or otherwise, of Al Capone! Whale watching is also an option.

FACTFILE

Tourism

www.tourisme-saint-pierre-et-miquelon.com

Population 6,080

Restaurants

L'Atelier Gourmand/
Chat Luthier/Feu du Braise

Corner Brook

Corner Brook has much to see in its own right but is also the stepping off point for UNESCO world heritage site Gros Morne National Park. If you are going to take a tour then visiting the Tablelands is the one for there are few places on earth where the geology is such that you can set foot on the earth's mantle. A Parks Canada interpretation walk introduces 500-year old rock formations, local flora including the pitcher plant, and serpentine which is used in Inuit carvings.

For those who don't fancy a bus trip there is a tourist information kiosk and covered market with local crafts on the quayside. You will be greeted with traditional Newfoundland music as well as a dog or two and be handed complimentary maps. There's also a free shuttle to City Hall.

Here is the Corner Brook Museum and Archives with stories and photos of those that came and settled as well as exhibits on the pulp and paper industry and the aboriginal peoples. Captain Cook was the first to map the Bay of Islands in 1767 and the trail makes for a very popular shore excursion.

If you want to do something a bit more adventurous head for the nearby Marble Mountain ski resort where nine ziplines traversing the Steady Brook Falls await. A two-hour Humber River Cruise is a gentle way of learning about the geology, history and native folklore. Here also is a great restaurant, Madison's at Marble Inn, where I had my first moose salami and seal sausage.

FACTFILE

Tourism

www.cornerbrook.com
www.cruisetheedge.com

Population 20,080

Restaurants

Newfound Sushi/
Madison's at Marble Inn

COMEDIAN Mike Doyle

(and why he thinks Simon Cowell is wrong about cruise ship entertainers)



Have you always been a professional entertainer? How did you get your first break as a comedian?

I started off in the working men's clubs of South Wales and holiday camps as we used to call them, but this was on a part-time basis as a singer-guitarist in a band. I used to love watching the comics who came to entertain.

How did you start working cruise ships? What was your first gig on board?

In 1982 I saw an ad in The Stage and went for an interview at the old P&O office in East London. I got the job as an Entertainments Officer on board SS Oriana cruising out of Sydney. We used to have Pub Night, the crowd were all Aussies and I was given a little spot every cruise. Soon I had a 30 minute spot and later came a couple of main cabaret spots in the main lounge.

How many cruises do you now work on each year?

I work up to 10 months a year on ships now. I used to be always on P&O but now my top three for work are Celebrity, Royal Caribbean and Cunard.

What keeps you occupied the rest of the year?

When not cruising I'm home with my wife Marie and my son Sam. My eldest son works as stage crew on Queen Elizabeth at the moment. At home I still do gigs around Wales, I have my annual theatre tour taking in the Swansea Grand and the New Theatre, Cardiff. I also have a regular voiceover gig and I have done quite a bit of TV this year – Time Of Your Life and Thanks For Watching on ITV 1 Wales, and Wales in the '70s for BBC Bristol. This year will be my 23rd year in panto.

What are the best (and worst) aspects of cruises and cruise audiences?

The best bit about cruising has to be playing to packed crowds in beautiful theatres and seeing the world. The worst is the constant flying to join ships. I sometimes tell myself I get paid to fly. The show bit is a lot easier, some people don't like long days at sea, the most I've done is 10 days in one go, but I like the sea days, I find the ship then can get on with doing what it does best...sail!

Have you ever "died" on stage on a ship? What did you do to get the audience back?

Any act who says they have never had a bad night is in cloud cuckoo land, I remember once I was on Crystal Serenity and had my two evening shows to do. The first could not have gone any better, I had a standing ovation and almost skipped back to my stateroom in the deepest of joy. I had my cup of tea and enjoyed the feedback from the cruise director – "man you killed out there." Then I made the biggest mistake ever; I walked back on stage for the late show with the glory of the 8.30 in my mind and the audience hated me. I even said: "What's up, the first crowd were great?" Well I wasn't great at all but I still stood there and did my time. I'm lucky in the sense that I can sing, and that can pull me out of a tight squeeze when it's tough.

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How has cruise entertainment changed and developed since you first started working on ships?

I have seen such a huge change in the way entertainment is now delivered, there are far more ships around now with more entertainers working across many brands, the first thing I noticed was the Comedy Store type of comic coming on P&O Cruises. It was a

“Simon Cowell is wrong to disrespect cruise ships, it’s where variety is right now”

bold step for the company, some loved it and some hated it. Then came the lookalike acts – again, mixed reviews, some of the acts that perform this act are amazing. The in-house production show has become very popular, Royal Caribbean have full performances of Hairspray and We Will Rock You... incredible! The show

“Eclipse” performed on Celebrity Eclipse is breath taking. We are seeing acts like Tenors Of Rock coming on now with a loud and proud all-out rock show. I play appropriately to what ever line I’m on; for Silversea I’m more like an after-dinner act, then on Royal I go for it all guns blazing. I think we still have big things to come on ships...Anthem Of The Seas will have dodgem cars, for goodness sake!!

Do you get many opportunities to interact with the resident entertainers on board? Rehearse with the band? How important is it to have a good relationship with the cruise director?

It’s always nice when you arrive at the ship and you have mates looking forward to seeing you, I have made some great friends over the years from captains to hotel directors, cruise directors, musical directors and musicians, but it’s tough turning up at a ship where you know no one. I always try to make a new person feel at home because I know how it feels, I hate being the new boy. There’s nothing worse than a young assistant cruise director asking you with a fake grin on his or her face “So, Mike, what can we expect from you then tonight.”

Are there more opportunities for comedians these days, or fewer?

Everyone wants to laugh on a cruise so yes it’s better to be a funny man or a good all rounder. It is becoming harder for some straight singers to find work on certain cruise lines these days – the show cast members have some amazing voices so some singers are left behind.

What might surprise people about your job? What surprises YOU about your job?

What surprises me about my job is the number of guests that think we entertainers don’t have nice

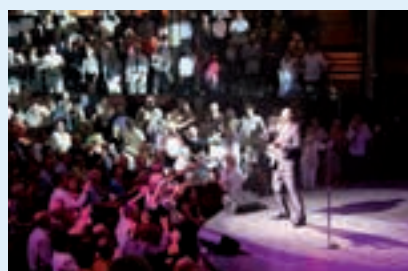
accommodation. It’s the silly questions like: “Do you eat the same food as us?” “Do you get paid,” and comments like “You should turn professional.” Then you get “Is your cabin below the water line” and “Do you pay for your flights to get here?” It drives you mad but at the same time makes you laugh. I think what surprises the guests is how great the shows are and how big some of these theatres at sea actually are. I love it when you see the guests’ faces on embark day when they see how huge their ship is. I started on SS Oriana, 42,000 tons and I thought that was massive; now they are more like 142,000 tons and bigger.

What is your favourite part of the job? And the least favourite?

My favourite is the performing and then the cold beer afterwards and the going ashore with mates or “up the road” as we call it. The worst part is the flying. I don’t like ships’ officers who love to show off their stripes – some think that they are in the Royal Navy and not on a cruise ship. I remember a captain once telling his officers: “Calm down all of you, all we are doing is taking 2,000 passengers down to Tenerife and back, we are not going to war.”

Who would you love to see perform on a cruise ship?

I missed out seeing Dame Shirley Bassey on QM2. Barry Manilow once performed on QE2 and didn’t enjoy it, so the story goes. I think we will see many big names coming to entertain on cruise ships as they are getting bigger and bigger with great big theatres. Simon Cowell is wrong to disrespect cruise ships, it’s where variety is right now with hundreds of entertainers and musicians working all over the world. //



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Featured Excursions: Bergerac city tour

Day 5 Blaye - cruising the Garonne River - Bordeaux

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22 Mar	£2,329	£1,479	£850
5 Apr	£2,799	£1,699	£1,100
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19 Apr	£2,949	£2,699	£250
3 May	£2,929	£2,679	£250
10 May	£3,029	£2,779	£250
24 May	£2,949	£2,699	£250
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CABIN SUPPLEMENTS

Prices are per person, based on two people sharing

Cabin upgrade supplements: Cat 2: £350, Cat 1: £780, Suite: £1,780

For single cabins an additional supplement will also apply: Cat 3: £1,180 Cat 2: £1,190 Cat 1: £1,200

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T&C's apply. Calls free from BT landlines, mobiles may vary. †Unlimited beverages do not include premium wine and premium spirits. At Titan, we ensure early bookers never miss out. The 'struck through' fares in the price panels either represent a saving against our full selling price and are therefore our best available early booking discounts, or a saving against a previously published selling price. Offers expire 31 December 2014. Availability at all offer prices is limited, and once sold, discounts will reduce or be withdrawn completely.

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GARY BUCHANAN takes a genteel meander through the waterways of Sweden

Most cultures have their pagan legacies, and in Sweden it's Midsummer. This, the biggest celebration of the year, dates back to the Middle Ages and is a paean to light, marking the start of the brief but glorious summer.

In these northern latitudes townsfolk and villagers erect vine-covered maypoles with a cross and two hoops. Revellers, garlanded with braided krans of wild flowers on their heads, dance bewildering routines around these midsommerstångs like woodland

nymphs, singing songs with romantic innuendos to evoke fertility and prosperity for the coming year.

I arrived in Gothenburg shortly before midnight in late June. The sun's faint glow was still illuminating a salmon-coloured sky that gave the cityscape a chromatic profundity. In the Haga district, where wooden houses nestle along cobbled streets, midsummer revellers with their floral chaplets crowded the gentrified bars quaffing aquavit or local brews such as Ocean Bryggeriet.



M/S Juno emerges from a lock
Picture: GORDON BAIN

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Day 5 Cruising the Iron Gates

Spend a peaceful day cruising the majestic Iron Gates, a spectacularly scenic stretch of the Danube that marks the boundary between Romania and Serbia.

Day 6 Vidin - Cruising the Danube River

Featured Excursions: Choice of Belgradchik rock formations or Romanian 'Cetate Cultural Port' visit

Day 7 Rousse (Veliko Tarnovo and Arbanassi or Rousse and Ivanovo)

Featured Excursions: Choice of Veliko Tarnovo and Arbanassi with authentic Bulgarian lunch or Rousse walking tour and Ivanovo and Basarbovo monasteries

Day 8 Giurgiu, transfer to Bucharest

Featured Excursions: Bucharest city tour with People's Palace visit

Day 9 Bucharest

Today you can explore Bucharest at your leisure. You might want to take in some of its most striking monuments and landmarks. Or, you could soak up some of the nation's cultural history by visiting the National Museum of Art of Romania.

Day 10 Bucharest - London

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* On these dates itinerary operates in reverse

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FACTFILE

MS JUNO

Built:	1874
Length:	103 ft
Passengers:	48
Cabins:	29



Pictures from top:
M/S Juno during her descent of the picturesque Carl-Johan lock staircase. Picture: GORDON BAIN.
Captain's view as M/S Juno nudges into a lock. Picture: GARY BUCHANAN.

Gothenburg is as much about boats and water as it is about bricks and mortar.

Built on the broad estuary of the Göta River, it was the starting point for my alluring cruise back in time, along a scenic waterway that meanders past shadowy forests, flaxen meadows and shimmering lakes. After breakfast I made my way to a quayside in front of the Casino Cosmopol where a steamer from a bygone era awaited guests assembled on a red carpet. With its white, riveted hull and single squat funnel, the 254-tonne M/S Juno resembled a steamboat from my childhood imagination. Festooned with birch log fenders, and with two upper decks of varnished wooden doors and brass fittings, it looked for all the world like an overblown model that has escaped from an antique shop.

Built in 1874 at the Swedish Motala shipyard, Juno is the world's oldest registered passenger ship with overnight accommodation. Its passenger list has included Hans Christian Andersen and Henrik Ibsen, and in 2004 its historical importance was recognised by the National Maritime Museum of Sweden.

Following in the footsteps of these illustrious writers, I climbed on board and left the 21st century behind. With a capacity of 48 passengers my peripatetic time capsule eschewed modern life, its decks the prerogative of twitchers rather than tweeters. The genteel Juno is perfect for those who appreciate the grandness of simplicity and the simplicity of grandeur.

There are six cabins on Bridge Deck; eight on Shelter Deck and 15 on Main Deck. Imagine a railway sleeper outfitted with rich textiles and you get close to the layout of each compact cabin which has

bunk beds, wash basin and small wardrobe; there are showers and toilets on all three decks. The blue and yellow Swedish flag flutters proudly from the ensign staff and the rendezvous that is the canopied Bridge Deck offers unimpeded views from its wicker chairs. Further forward there's an honesty bar and coffee station. One deck below is a salon with small library and boutique; this is where daily briefings take place. Forward of this is the dining room where breakfast is smörgåsbord-style while lunch and dinner are served by two charming stewardesses.

My adventure got underway with a resolute toot on the whistle. We sailed past the Gothenburg Maritime Museum – the largest floating maritime museum in the world which includes the fire-ship 'Fladen' and the warship 'Småland'. The four-masted barque 'Viking' built in 1907 contrasted with a backdrop of glass office blocks and the incongruous red-and-white skyscraper locally known as 'the lipstick'.

The sedate four-day voyage from the Kattegat to the Baltic through Sweden's rocky heartland would involve navigating a river, transiting three canal systems with 66 locks and crossing eight lakes. Whilst the entire 385-mile route is known informally as the Göta Kanal, strictly speaking the term applies only to the 119-mile manmade section from Sjötorp to Mem.

Conceived by Swedish admiral and politician Baltzar von Platen in 1810, this nautical shortcut was intended to boost trade and enhance defences. With the expertise of Scottish engineer Thomas Telford and 58,000 workers digging and blasting through the granite rock, the umbilical waterway was inaugurated in 1832.

8 days from ~~£2099~~ **£1499**

SAVE up to **£950 per person** - book by 31 December 2014

**Castles along
the Rhine**
Amsterdam to Basel | 8 days
ALL-INCLUSIVE†



Gracing the shores of the Rhine are more medieval castles than in any other river valley. The fairytale castles combined with endless terraced vineyards and old-world towns offer a breathtaking landscape around every bend of the Rhine as you sail through Germany's Upper Middle Rhine Valley onboard the premiere ships on the Rhine.



Day 1 London - Amsterdam

Begin with Titan's **VIP Home Departure Service®** to London Heathrow or Gatwick Airport for your scheduled British Airways or another leading airline flight to Amsterdam. Meet your Uniworld representative on arrival and transfer to the port to embark the S.S. Antoinette or River Empress.

Day 2 Cologne

Featured Excursions: Cologne walking tour with cathedral visit

Day 3 Koblenz - Cruising the romantic Rhine - Boppard

Featured Excursions: Choice of Koblenz walking tour or aerial cable car ride to Ehrenbreitstein Fortress or guided Boppard village stroll

Day 4 Scenic Sailing of Romantic Rhine - Rudesheim

Featured Excursions: Exclusive Castle Vollrads wine tasting

Day 5 Germersheim (Speyer)

Featured Excursions: Choice of Speyer walking tour or exclusive Doktorenhof vinegar estate visit and tasting

Day 6 Kehl (Strasbourg)

Featured Excursions: Choice of Strasbourg by canal or exclusive 'Do as the Locals Do' Strasbourg walking tour

Day 7 Breisach (Kaysersberg and Riquewihr or Colmar)

Featured Excursions: Choice of Alsatian wine villages or Colmar city tour

In the evening, enjoy a Captain's Farewell Reception and Gala Dinner.

Day 8 Basel - London

Disembark the ship and transfer to Basel Airport for your British Airways or another leading airline flight home. Arrive at London Heathrow or Gatwick where our staff will greet you and our transport will transfer you to your own front door.

Please note: *Itinerary is subject to change.*

CABIN SUPPLEMENTS

Prices are per person, based on two people sharing

S.S. Antoinette

Cabin upgrade supplements: Cat 4: £180, Cat 3: £550, Cat 2: £800, Cat 1: £1,080, Suite: £1,750, Royal Suite: £2,700

River Empress

Cabin upgrade supplements: Cat 4: £150, Cat 3: £370, Cat 2: £520, Cat 1: £770, Suite: £1400

For single cabins an additional supplement will also apply: Cats 5 & 4: £1,150, Cats 3, 2 & 1: £1,200

Flight upgrade prices on request

2015 DATES & PRICES

Date	Cat 5 Full Price	Cat. 5 Offer Price	Book by 31 Dec '14 and save
S.S. Antoinette			
15 Mar	£2,099	£1,499	£600
22 Mar*	£2,299	£1,599	£700
26 Apr	£3,049	£2,799	£250
3 May*	£2,929	£2,679	£250
17 May*	£3,099	£2,799	£300
31 May*	£3,099	£2,799	£300
14 Jun*	£3,099	£2,799	£300
28 Jun*	£2,979	£2,729	£250
12 Jul*	£2,829	£2,529	£300
26 Jul*	£2,829	£2,579	£250
2 Aug	£2,799	£2,549	£250
9 Aug*	£2,829	£2,579	£250
30 Aug	£3,199	£2,899	£300
6 Sep*	£3,379	£3,079	£300
27 Sep	£3,199	£2,949	£250
11 Oct	£3,049	£2,799	£250
25 Oct	£2,399	£2,099	£300
1 Nov*	£2,199	£1,899	£300
8 Nov	£2,099	£1,699	£400

River Empress

1 Apr	£2,629	£1,779	£850
8 Apr*	£2,749	£1,799	£950
6 May*	£2,929	£2,629	£300
15 Jul†*	£2,979	£2,729	£250
19 Aug	£2,849	£2,599	£250
30 Sep	£3,199	£2,999	£200
14 Oct	£2,929	£2,829	£100
21 Oct*	£2,749	£2,499	£250
4 Nov*	£2,199	£1,799	£400

* On these dates itinerary operates in reverse

† Family programme operates, children may be onboard

Tour Code: UCR

Call FREE on **0808 102 0184** to book or request your brochure quoting **WC3 5EI** or visit www.titantravel.co.uk/uniworld

Opening times: Mon & Tue 8.30am – 7pm, Wed – Fri 8.30am – 6pm, Sat 9am – 5pm



T&C's apply. Calls free from BT landlines, mobiles may vary. †Unlimited beverages do not include premium wine and premium spirits. At Titan, we ensure early bookers never miss out. The 'struck through' fares in the price panels either represent a saving against our full selling price and are therefore our best available early booking discounts, or a saving against a previously published selling price. Offers expire 31 December 2014. Availability at all offer prices is limited, and once sold, discounts will reduce or be withdrawn completely.

“Under a vivid blue summer sky scuffed with white clouds there was a frisson of excitement amongst my fellow passengers”

Approaching our first lock at Lilla Edet under a vivid blue summer sky scuffed with white clouds there was a frisson of excitement amongst my fellow passengers, mostly Germans and Americans as well as Norwegians and Swedes seeing their country from a nostalgic perspective.

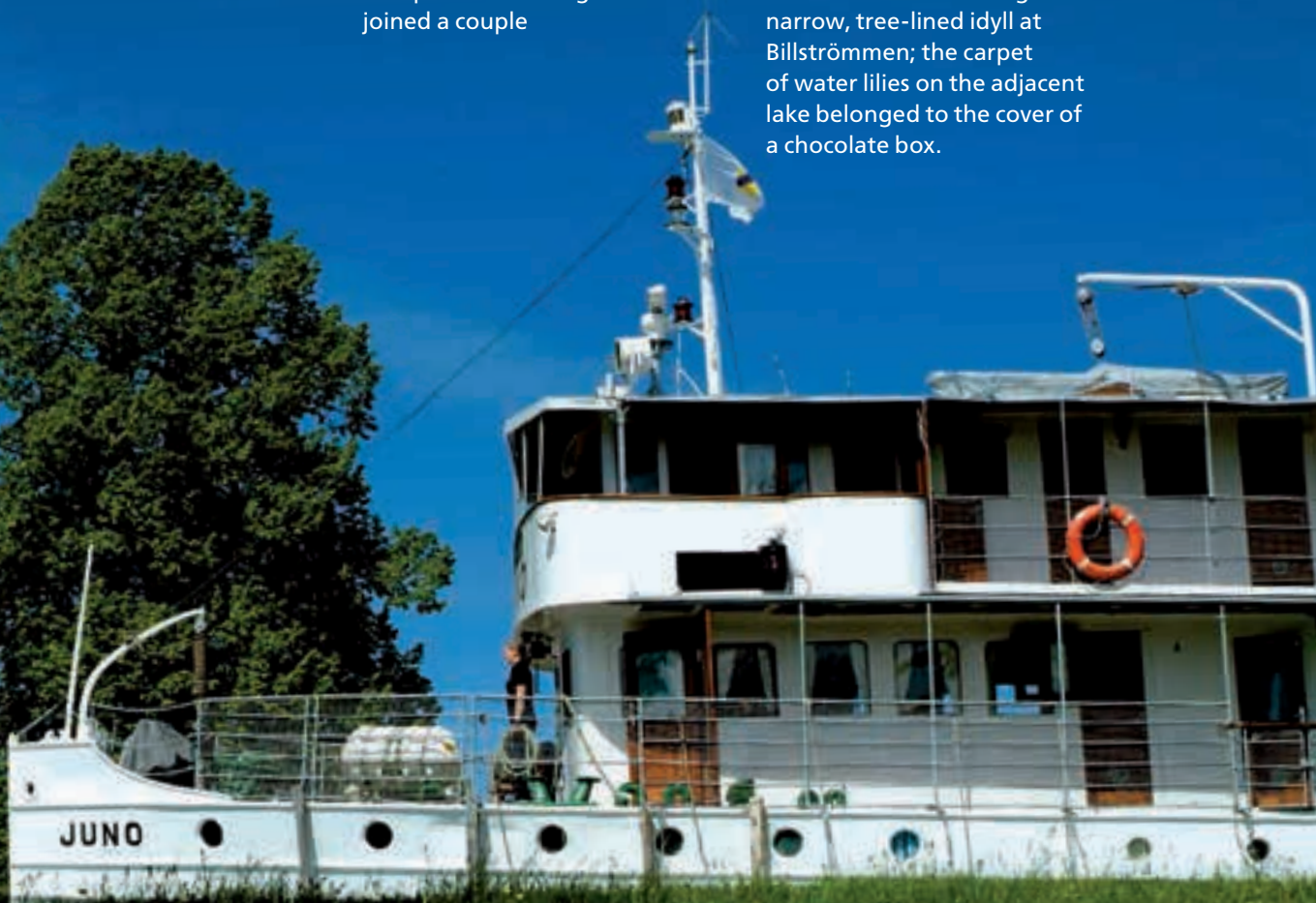
In the afternoon we navigated the four-lock staircase at Trollhättan before tying up in this comely hamlet. It was here I discovered the phrase “Ska vi fika?” which translates as “shall we have a coffee break?” In true Swedish tradition I chatted with some holidaying Stockholmers in a café frescoed with flowers; they corrected my pronunciation of Göta to “yeu-ta” and explained that it is often referred to as the ‘Blue Ribbon’.

That evening we crossed Lake Vänern, Sweden’s largest lake and third largest in Western Europe. In the dining room I joined a couple

from Perth, Australia, who were including the journey as part of a five-week Scandinavian odyssey; as well as a father and daughter from Atlanta who turned out to be ardent collectors of canal trips.

The cuisine on board reflects authentic regional Swedish cooking and is consistently excellent and memorable. That night we dined on Minced Elk Parcels with Cranberry Chutney; Poached Lake Mälaren Zander served with Shellfish Sauce and New Potatoes; finished off with a Lingonberry Parfait.

I was woken in the early hours as Juno jostled into the narrow lock at Sjötorp. We had commenced our transit of the man-made portion of the Göta Kanal. By lunchtime we reached Lanthöjden where an obelisk marks the canal’s highest point at 300 feet above sea level. A couple of hours later Captain Albert Håkansson manned the helm of his historic vessel through a narrow, tree-lined idyll at Billströmmen; the carpet of water lilies on the adjacent lake belonged to the cover of a chocolate box.



17 days from ~~£5299~~ **£3949**

SAVE up to **£1400 per person** - book by 31 December 2014

**Timeless Wonders
of Vietnam, Cambodia
& the Mekong**
Ho Chi Minh City to Hanoi | 17 days



ANGKOR WAT TEMPLE, SIEM REAP, CAMBODIA

There can be no more a striking cultural contrast than between bustling Vietnam and the tranquility of Cambodia. Embark the River Orchid and sail down the Mekong River from My Tho in Vietnam through the diverse countryside of Cambodia before disembarking and travelling to Siem Reap, gateway to the ancient Angkor Wat Temple Complex.

Day 1 London

Begin with Titan's **VIP Home Departure Service®** to London Heathrow or Gatwick Airport for your scheduled Cathay Pacific or another leading airline overnight flight to Ho Chi Minh City.

Day 2 Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon)

Arrive in Ho Chi Minh City and meet your Uniworld representative on arrival and transfer to the Park Hyatt Hotel for the next two nights.

Day 3 Ho Chi Minh City

Featured Excursions: Ho Chi Minh City tour

Day 4 Ho Chi Minh City - transfer to My Tho

Featured Excursions: Cu Chi Tunnels

Day 5 Cai Be - Sa Dec

Featured Excursions: Cai Be sampan cruise, An Kiet House, rice-paper and candy-making shop, Sa Dec canal cruise, brick and rice factories, and Huynh Thuy Le House

Day 6 Chau Doc - Chau Phong Island - cruising the Mekong River

Featured Excursions: Chau Doc harbour cruise and visit to Cham tribal village with fish farm

Day 7 Phnom Penh

Featured Excursions: Phnom Penh city tour

Day 8 Phnom Penh

Featured Excursions: Choeung Ek Memorial Stupa and grounds and Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum

Day 9 Cruising the Tonlé Sap River - Kampong Chhnang - cruising the Mekong River

Featured Excursions: Tonlé Sap River cruise and Kampong Chhnang exploration cruise

Day 10 Kampong Cham - Wat Hanchey

Featured Excursions: Phnom Pros and Phnom Srey Monastery and Wat Hanchey

Day 11 Kampong Cham (disembark) - Siem Reap

Featured Excursions: Siem Reap city tour by remark

Day 12 Siem Reap

Featured Excursions: Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom
Please note: Order of sightseeing may change on day 12 and 13. Temple visits are subject to change due to factors beyond our control.

Day 13 Siem Reap

Featured Excursions: Banteay Srei and Ta Prohm

Day 14 Siem Reap - Hanoi

Fly from Siem Reap to Hanoi today and on arrival check in to the InterContinental Hanoi Westlake hotel.

Day 15 Hanoi

Featured Excursions: Hanoi city tour, Thang Long water puppet show, 'Hanoi Hilton', and colonial Hanoi cyclo tour

Day 16 Depart Hanoi

Transfer to the airport at Hanoi for your return overnight flight home with Cathay Pacific or another leading airline.

Day 17 Arrive London

Arrive at London Heathrow or Gatwick where our staff will greet you and our transport will transfer you to your own front door.

Please note: Itinerary is subject to change.

Cruise is on a full board basis, hotels on a bed and breakfast basis. See website for full details.

2015 DATES & PRICES

Date	Cat 3 Full Price	Cat. 3 Offer Price	Book by 31 Dec '14 and save
6 Jan	£5,449	£4,049	£1,400
10 Jan*	£5,449	£4,099	£1,350
20 Jan	£5,449	£4,899	£550
24 Jan*	£5,449	£4,899	£550
3 Feb	£5,449	£4,899	£550
17 Feb	£5,449	£4,899	£550
21 Feb*	£5,449	£4,049	£1,400
7 Mar*	£5,379	£4,829	£550
17 Mar	£5,299	£3,949	£1,350
21 Mar*	£5,249	£4,699	£550
18 Jul*	£4,799	£4,249	£550
11 Aug	£4,779	£4,229	£550
29 Aug*	£4,849	£4,299	£550
8 Sep	£4,849	£4,299	£550
22 Sep	£4,899	£4,349	£550
26 Sep*	£4,949	£4,399	£550
10 Oct*	£5,049	£4,499	£550
20 Oct	£5,199	£4,649	£550
3 Nov	£5,199	£4,649	£550
7 Nov*	£5,199	£4,649	£550
17 Nov	£5,199	£4,649	£550
1 Dec	£5,199	£4,649	£550
15 Dec	£5,499	£4,949	£550
19 Dec*	£5,599	£5,049	£550
29 Dec	£5,499	£4,949	£550

* On these dates itinerary operates in reverse

CABIN SUPPLEMENTS

Prices are per person, based on two people sharing

Cabin upgrade supplements: Cat 2: £250, Cat 1: £550, Suite: £1,450

For single cabins an additional supplement will also apply: Cats 3, 2 & 1: £1,800

Flight upgrade prices on request Tour Code: UMK

Call FREE on **0808 102 0184** to book or request your brochure quoting **WC3 5EI** or visit www.titantravel.co.uk/uniworld

Opening times: Mon & Tue 8.30am – 7pm, Wed – Fri 8.30am – 6pm, Sat 9am – 5pm



T&C's apply. Calls free from BT landlines, mobiles may vary. At Titan, we ensure early bookers never miss out. The 'struck through' fares in the price panels either represent a saving against our full selling price and are therefore our best available early booking discounts, or a saving against a previously published selling price. Offers expire 31 December 2014. Availability at all offer prices is limited, and once sold, discounts will reduce or be withdrawn completely.

Previous page: crew prepare to secure M/S Juno in a lock

This page, from top: Alongside in Motala, the capital of the Göta Kanal. Typical lunch

A merry band greeted us at Forsvik, site of the oldest lock in the canal. Clutching posies of wildflowers and playing Swedish songs on an accordion, local well-wishers provided an impromptu salutation. This tradition was started by the religious Kindbom family in 1915 and their descendants continue to bless every ship that passes by. An excursion to the Karlsborg Fortress gave the opportunity to stretch my legs before another tasty dinner was served as we crossed placid Lake Vättern. We docked at Motala, known as the 'Capital of the Göta Kanal', as Diana, one of the company's other ships built in 1931 loomed in the twilight on her way to Gothenburg.

Our meander continued at around nine miles per hour and early risers were rewarded with a nightingale's morning song. Sipping a strong coffee I was rapt as we began our descent in the lock system of Berg. At each lock the venerable Juno insinuated itself into the dark, dripping stone chambers, accompanied by an ominous crunching of the birch fenders that encircle the vessel's 22-ft beam. A sprightly able seaman jumped off to secure the ship's lines into strategically placed iron ringbolts. The massive gates swung shut behind us like the Last Judgement as water frothed and swirled around the hull.

Our descent continued through what is undoubtedly the most captivating section of this feat of engineering. The Carl-Johan



staircase is the longest in the entire canal with seven interconnected locks. Many of us alighted at the top to consign this transit to a trillion pixels.

That evening we docked in the medieval town of Söderköping. One of the stewardesses had crafted a krans of buttercups and oxeye daisies for the chief officer who headed to the best ice cream parlour in town with deckhands and several passengers in tow. Shortly before midnight we arrived in Mem as the ethereal twilight blush wove a spell of romance over the landscape.

On our last day we traversed Lake Mälaren and exchanged whistle salutes with the company's third ship – the Wilhelm Tham of 1912. After a farewell lunch, we negotiated the Sankt Anna archipelago of small forested islands before sailing past Drottningholm Castle, home of the Swedish Royal Family. One final lock at Hammarby returned us to sea level and all too soon we rejoined the present day at Gamla Stan – Stockholm's historic Old Town. //

FACTFILE

M/S JUNO – ON-BOARD COSTS

Basics	Bottle of beer £3.85, glass of wine £8.60, bottled water £2.10 (33cl)
Laundry	N/A
Speciality	N/A
Spa	N/A
Tips	At guests' discretion – most added £10 per day or more to their final bills

The Göta Kanal Classic Swedish Cruise is available from late May to late August 2015, through Simply Sweden (www.simplysweden.co.uk; 01427 700115).

From £1,545pp

including return flights to Gothenburg or Stockholm, one night's b&b in Stockholm, one night's b&b in Gothenburg and three nights on board M/S Juno on a full board basis.

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**The World's Best
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Now ALL INCLUSIVE on every European itinerary†

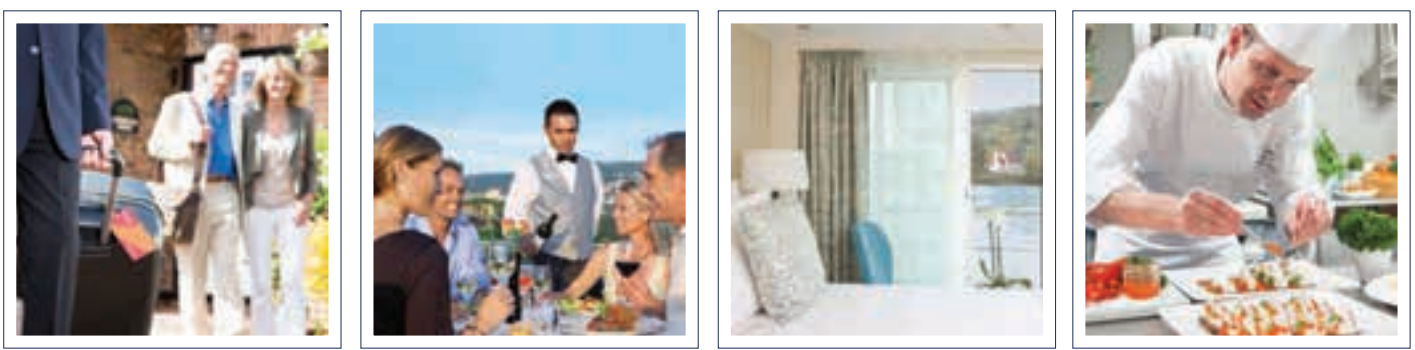
Including door-to-door holiday transfers*

All of the itineraries featured on the previous pages and 35 more are showcased in full in the latest 2015 Uniworld brochure. Request your copy now and take advantage of superb early booking offers on river cruises that truly deserve to be called 'the world's best'!



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Dordogne • Gironde • Venice & the River Po • Volga • Mekong • Nile • Yangtze

2015 BROCHURE OUT NOW - SAVE up to £1400 per person**



Call FREE on **0808 102 0184** to request your brochure quoting **WC3 5EI** or visit www.titantravel.co.uk/uniworld
Opening times: Mon & Tue 8.30am – 7pm, Wed – Fri 8.30am – 6pm, Sat 9am – 5pm



T&C's apply. Calls free from BT landlines, mobiles may vary. *Except Scottish Islands and Sark. †Unlimited beverages do not include premium wine and premium spirits.
†Only on European itineraries, excludes Russia, the Mekong and China. At Titan, we ensure early bookers never miss out. The 'struck through' fares in the price panels either represent a saving against our full selling price and are therefore our best available early booking discounts, or a saving against a previously published selling price. **Offers expire 31 December 2014.
Availability at all offer prices is limited, and once sold, discounts will reduce or be withdrawn completely.



Clockwise from top: A simple Lutheran church, an Inuit woman in traditional dress and sealskin leggings, face-painted girls



Green and pleasant land

STEVE NEWMAN is surprised by the welcome he receives from the Inuits on a visit to the land of glaciers and icebergs

Have you ever been sniffed by the Inuits? Well if not and you land on the small community of Oqaatusat in western Greenland, be ready! I heard the sound of the drum long before I saw the two girls with their painted faces swaying and dancing towards me both welcoming and threatening at the same time.

It was the sniffing of my clothing and the protruding tongues that made me feel like some 18th century sea captain stepping ashore on a South Pacific island for the first time. This illusion was instantly shattered when the girls produced a plastic dish full of coins, asking for payment to be photographed.

This to me sums up Greenland quite nicely, a place that hits you with mixed emotions and some of the most magnificent scenery anywhere on Earth. We boarded MS Fram, our home for the next 10 days, at Kangerlussuaq, which is also the site of the international airport. Our trip started with a four hour flight from Copenhagen; Hurtigruten Cruises had chartered the whole plane so 170 of us nestled comfortably in a space normally full with 350.

Do try and get a window seat because you fly over the world's largest island's icecap for an hour before you land. It was a sight that will live with me for ever with

mountain peaks rising from the snow like pyramids from the sand and glaciers snaking their way across a barren wilderness.

This cruise takes in the Disko Bay area on the west coast. Not only are the icebergs here incredibly beautiful and awe inspiring but the rich waters attract a wealth of wild life. Above the Arctic Circle 24 hour daylight meant that when I couldn't sleep I could whale watch and on the first morning I saw a pod of Minkes, others saw a Bowhead whale and distant fins of Orcas plus herds of Greenland and Bearded seals.





From left: Landings from Fram are made by ice-strengthened boats, musk oxen, brightly-coloured houses cling to the rocks

During the 10 days I was on board we travelled as far north as Umanarvik some 360 miles (590 km) above the Arctic Circle visiting 10 settlements that varied in size from 3,000 to only 50 people. These visits were made by small boat landing on the shore line or sometimes a jetty so you must be prepared for the possibility of wet feet!

The Disko bay area is the magnet for visitors as it houses the Kangerlua Glacier, the largest glacier outside Antarctica, producing icebergs that can weigh up to 7 million tonnes each. The ice fjord is one of the incredible sites of the world and not to be missed so I took a boat trip whilst some went even better taking the helicopter flights from Illilissat town.

Fram is a cosy ship with a friendly crew and some of the best standards of service you will find in the adventure cruise sector. The food is not what you would expect from the higher end of the mainstream cruise market but I found it still to be very good and well-presented.

Nor is she as luxuriously fitted out as ships such as Noble Caledonia's Island Sky but this is, after all, adventure cruising; I have been on her three times now and I love going back.

All destinations have an introductory lecture the night before and there are excellent presentations on a variety of subjects from local geology to wildlife. We had a demonstration by an Inuit of their skills in a kayak and on occasions the local community came onboard to sing to us and talk of their culture. The look on the faces of the Inuit children as they experience a lift for the first time is worth every penny of your fare alone.

The Greenland people themselves are some the friendliest I have met anywhere and they love to laugh and chuckle. I had many a memorable conversation with them in the small communities; neither of us had any idea what the other was saying but we had a great time, playing football with gestures and play-acting to make our points!

They also gave me a feeling of sadness when I found a cabin that

FACTFILE

MS FRAM

Gross Tonnage	11647
Length	114 metres
Passengers	318
Berths	276
Number of Crew	74
Basics	Bottle of beer £3.40, glass of wine £3.80, cocktail £5, coffee free
Laundry:	One blouse or shirt, £2.50
Speciality restaurant/spa:	Not applicable
Internet:	One hour £6, six hours £20
Tips:	Recommended daily amount £8.



had the skulls of Walrus, Musk Oxen and Narwhal on the porch with vertebrae of seals carved into ornaments. The hunter went inside his house and brought out the photographs of these kills to show me. Not pleasant but I had come to Greenland to see life here for myself not to watch it on a television screen back home.

I had to have an open mind about hunting and fishing and some of the sights I saw in the smaller communities may well disturb some people. On all our shore landings the expedition team took their rifles in case of encounters with Polar Bears but it was made very clear that we were guests in the bears' territory and they are shot only as a very last resort after a series of counter measures. I was more worried about being eaten by the mosquitoes and was glad I had packed insect repellent and a face net.

Remember though that this is adventure cruising -one trip to a small community was cancelled as the sea was so rough we couldn't land the boats safely. Do not

ARCTIC WILDERNESS
ADVENTURE

Duration: 12 days

Dates: 12, 22 June 2015 from £4,980

Based on two people sharing an inside cabin

DISKO BAY AND THE
SOUTHERN FJORDS

Duration: 13 days

Dates: 2 July 2015 from £4,622

Flights for all cruises are included from Copenhagen to Kangerlussuaq and in some cases accommodation is provided in hotels in Copenhagen before or after the voyage.

www.hurtigruten.com

attempt to make a fuss of the sled dogs. They are pack animals and some of them can be vicious if you get too close. Sea sickness patches are a very good idea, Arctic storms can come out of nowhere.

Don't let that put you off though Greenland is a fascinating place. I'd go back tomorrow. //

Fear on flying

For some passengers, a flight is a necessary inconvenience on the way to a cruise in the sun, a shortcut to the Med, or an unavoidable journey to the Caribbean or Alaska perhaps. For others, it is an ordeal to be avoided at all costs, and the reason why they cruise from the UK. **DANIELLE FEAR** tells her story.

Boarding a Boeing 757 bound for a foreign destination was something I looked forward to every year as it marked the beginning of my highly-anticipated summer holiday. I was in my element when listening to the sound of jet engines revving up as the pilot prepared to race down the runway – take-off was the optimal part of the flight for me. I got such a rush of adrenaline from it. In my younger years I had contemplated becoming an air stewardess, so I too could get out there and see more of the world and get paid to do it! In 2001, however, that all changed.

I had a dreadful flight back from New York City, but that alone is not what clipped my wings, I suddenly developed a terrible fear of heights and it has plagued me ever since. Realistically, I know the statistics of anything going catastrophically wrong mid-air are slimmer than a supermodel's waist, but it is always in the back of my mind and it does inhibit me. In 2013, I made the decision to start taking small steps towards overcoming my fear and finally plucked up the courage to take on the cable car in Madeira, during the first stop on a five-week round trip cruise from the UK to the Caribbean. To say I was a nervous wreck would be an understatement, I was downright terror-stricken, but afterwards I was immensely pleased that I did it. The views across Funchal Bay were awe-inspiring. I had seen the city from many angles but the view from over 1,500ft was undoubtedly the best. I was a quivering, sweaty mess by

the time I made it back to the ground, but the experience was worth it.

There are courses that one can take to help overcome the fear of flying, several major airlines offer them at airports across the country and at various costs – I just haven't quite had the opportunity to put my name down for one of them yet. My fear of boarding a plane affected my travel plans for a long time until I discovered the wonderful world of cruising. I boarded P&O Cruises' Oriana on a 12-night itinerary that would prove to be the making of the new and improved Miss Fear (no pun intended – that is my name). Once again the door to the world was wide open, so I ran through it and whole-heartedly embraced it.

Cutting out flying has been a blessing and a curse. I admit that I do miss out on a lot of things, but I am also fortunate to experience a lot too. I certainly cannot complain. In 2014 alone, I have so far set foot in eight different countries and all without having to even think about an aircraft. Opting for ex-UK voyages that take in regions such as the Caribbean, North America and the Eastern Mediterranean, for example, means I am often travelling for upwards of 17-nights at a time. When you are in love with ocean travel the fear of flying suddenly becomes a blessing. I can spend longer at sea, where I am in my absolute element. Marvellous! In my opinion, the world can be seen via cruise ship and not just when embarking on a world voyage. Granted, some regions are

harder to uncover than others but when there's a will there's a way. Even if I never overcome my fear of flying, I will still see everything that I want to see, it may just take me a little longer, but if there's a port then get there I will. //

HOW COULD DANIELLE BE HELPED TO OVERCOME HER FEAR OF FLYING?

For £189, easyJet offer ground-based courses at airports around the UK followed by experience flights for nervous flyers – and they estimate that one in six people is affected.

www.fearlessflyer.easyjet.com

British Airways operate a similar scheme, charging £195 and offering a 10 per cent discount off the cost of any flight booked within six months.

www.flyingwithconfidence.com

Virgin Atlantic has been offering its own courses since 1997, and also has a special version especially for children. Their ground course costs £120; the premium course including a flight is £267, and the children's course costs £375.

www.flyingwithoutfear.co.uk



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When you arrive at each mode of transport in your journey simply fold it down and pack it away in the special travel case. And when you arrive unfold it and you're away! It only takes around 30 seconds to fold or unfold but will save you the frustration of not knowing whether or not you can make that trip.

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or visit: www.luggiescooters.com



Truckle treats

Charlie Turnbull will be selecting and sourcing a range of British and European cheeses for the Market Cafe in the atrium on P&O's Britannia, including guest cheeses from different ports of call. He will also be hosting cheese tastings in the ship's Cookery Club on board and taking passengers on exclusive shore excursions to markets and artisan producers.

World of Cruising readers don't have to wait until the ship's launch next March for Charlie's choice of his favourite cheeses. Here's his Top 10, including some classics and some rarities. Just remember Charlie's one rule – try before you buy.



1 Traditional Cheddar

2 Gorgonzola Dolce

3 Stilton PDO

4 Goat Camembert

5 Selles Sur Cher AOP

6 Grand Murot

7 Viejo Maestro

8 Comte

9 Camembert AOP

10 Ossau Iraty AOP

Whose and where from	Why	Where you can buy it
Montgomery, Westcombe or Quickes in the English West Country.	Cloth-wrapped traditional West Country Cheddar, aged at least 12 months, this is the iconic taste of England. The style has been imitated all over the world but never replicated. Rich with the taste of the land, savoury and sometimes yeasty, agricultural, honest and strong. It is one of the most distinct cheeses in the world; each truckle is unique.	Monty's and Westcombe are in Waitrose, Quickes is available more widely. The Quickes dairy also make ground-breaking goat and sheep milk Cheddars that recently won more awards than their cows' milk.
My favourite is the Mario Costa of Novara, west of Milan.	There are (arguably) three gorgons, the Picante (also Tradizionale), Dolce (sometimes dolceficato) and Mountain. Dolce is softer, sweeter and so gooey it is nearly a beauty therapy. A one-cheese meal for all the family. I can't live without it.	Dolce are becoming more popular and are available in most cheese shops and some supermarkets.
The best is Colston Bassett.	The other of the two great British cheeses. Never buy it in a jar, that is the cheese equivalent of roadkill.	Colston Bassett won the Nantwich Best in Show this year and was in the top five at the World Cheese Award in November 2013, but there are other good Stiltons. Don't get the pre-pack, it's often bitter and may have lost its sweetness.
I like the Soignon, but that's the only one I can get in the UK easily.	It the cheese I reach for if I want to persuade a goatist person of the pleasures of goat cheese. It's incredibly reliable in ripening. You get the savoury mushroom distinctive of the Camembert overlaid with the sweet velvety nuttiness of the goats' milk.	Sainsbury's do one in their Taste the Difference line. Otherwise ask around.
From the Loire, the world centre of excellence in artisan goats' cheese as far as I'm concerned. For Selles, condition is more important than the producer.	Selles has three stages of maturation, I like the last: the ash-covered rind has become loose as the cheese breaks down just under the skin into a milky cream. It's cheese in a cheese sauce.	Good cheesemongers, I've never seen a good one in a supermarket even in France. Condition is everything: if it's too firm and there is no gooyness under the skin, get something else.
From the town of Grand Muroil in the Auvergne district of France.	Pasteurised and rind-washed, it's like a large doughnut complete with a hole at its centre. Despite the pong and distinct flavour, it's very easy eating for all the family and is kid friendly.	Pretty rare even in good cheesemongers.
An Extramaduran goats milk cheese that is first cousin to the better-known sheep's milk Torta del Casar. Extramadura is south west of Madrid in the mountains up against the Portuguese border.	Get it young and don't keep it too warm. It's about 7-8 inches in diameter, 1.5 inches high and squeezes like a partially deflated balloon. I cut the top off and peel it back, revealing a pot of near liquid white goats cheese.	Only one UK importer that I know, and I only stock it at Christmas as it's expensive and very little known. Just binge on it if you ever get the chance.
The Franche Comte region over by the Alps; there are many very great comte makers.	I like mine AT LEAST 16 months, at which point it's pretty pricey. To my mind France's greatest hard cheese and its most flexible as an everyday fridge cheese, for cheese boards and for cooking with.	Comte is in most supermarkets at 7-9 months matured which is barely out of the starting blocks in taste terms. Still a good cheese.
Normandy is Camembert's home and the best still come from there.	I have been to two festivals this summer and I took a handful of Camemberts to both. I had to keep them outside the tent for family harmony reasons, but while hard cheeses sweat, Camemberts just stink and get better. We could find our way home in the campsite in the dark just by following our noses.	Look for the AOP label (the European system of allowing communities to trademark their food heritage, like Champagne) if you can. Always buy your Camembert as far in advance of the date you need it as the dates will allow.
A Pyrenean cheese with a chequered history. I like Agour, their 12 month pasteurised. For some reason the unpasteurised peaks at 7 months and never gets its flavours up.	At its best, the greatest sheep's milks cheese in the world. OI has all the bases covered in balance with sweetness, salt, a tiny hint of lactic sourness and some savoury age, but it's the extras, the mountain flowers and tang of grass, that make this cheese so complex.	Most supermarkets carry an OI though rarely Agour. They vary enormously and are not cheap. If you find one you like stick with it, otherwise try somewhere you can taste before you buy.

Charity begins at sea

Cruise lines and their passengers raise millions of pounds a year for charities around the world. From orphanages and schools to wildlife rescue centres, from the Prince's Trust to UNICEF, all sorts of charities are on the receiving end of cruise line philanthropy and guests' generosity. Substantial corporate donations are matched by on-board fundraising activities, and in some cases shore excursions that combine sightseeing with volunteering. **CAROL WRIGHT** takes a look in the collection boxes

Charities on the receiving end roughly divide into people, places and environment. In the first category, Cunard has raised £1 million for the Prince's Trust since 2007 when the Duchess of Cornwall, accompanied by Prince Charles, launched Queen Victoria. The Trust gives disadvantaged young people in the UK practical and financial support to develop workplace skills, confidence and motivation. Cunard raises money by auctioning nautical maps at the end of each voyage and running special dinners for World Cruise passengers. Money is also raised ashore by auctioning cruises, arranging dedicated Prince's Trust voyages and events, fundraising drives at the company offices and taking part in sponsored bike rides. Young people supported by the Trust get practical help in the form of work placements offered by Cunard and Carnival UK.



Places and heritage are dear to Seabourn who have signed an agreement with UNESCO to raise \$1m. On board, speakers give talks on world heritage sites and projects. More than 150 designated World Heritage Sites are included on the company's itineraries, from Java's Borobudur to the Taj Mahal.

Saga raises money through its shipboard church services, charity dinners, raffles and sponsored deck walks. Since February 2006, £580,000 has gone to charities chosen by the captains, including the, Seamen's Missions and Cancer Awareness. The Saga Charitable Trust also invests in sustainable projects supporting local communities, increased opportunities for them to benefit from tourism. Projects are found in a wide number of countries including Cambodia, Morocco, Nepal and Zambia, and schools for under-privileged children in many areas.

Burma's humanitarian problems are the concern of Pandaw River Cruises with their charity working along the country's waterways building schools, setting up clinics and running a small hospital ship travelling from village to village.



Closest to home in many ways is Fred. Olsen whose passengers contribute about £80,000 a year to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. Three years ago, guest donations were matched by a company contribution to fund the launch of a £180,000 inshore rescue boat (left) in the Kyle of Lochalsh, Scotland – the fourth the company has paid for.

Crystal Cruises have one of the most impressive and extensive philanthropic programmes; the You Care, We Care that they call 'voluntourism'. Guests and crew work on special shore projects. This year additions were mucking out horses, walking rescue dogs for Guernsey's animal charity; planting trees to prevent volcanic land erosion in Iceland and helping construct buildings and clean the playground at a home for vulnerable and neglected children in Ghana. The scheme was launched in 2011 and at least one volunteer excursion is available on each cruise.



MSC works with UNICEF donating about £2.2 million since 2009 to improve the education of children living in Brazilian favelas. This year the project is to save children's lives through the provision of ready-to-use therapeutic food. Educational activities are arranged on board to raise awareness of global children's needs.



Polar region wildlife preservation concerns Aurora Expeditions and Quark Expeditions. This year Aurora adopted a polar bear on behalf of each passenger booked on their Spitsbergen Odyssey Cruise which next takes place in July 2015 working with the WWF's wildlife adoption programme. Quark runs auctions raising an average of £88,000 each season.



Macmillan Cancer Support is P&O's chosen charity, with officers and crew taking part in fund-raising challenges. Other events have included a gala ball and auction for masterclasses with the on-board celebrity chefs, signed navigation charts and weekly coffee and cupcake mornings on each ship. Princess Cruises, Celebrity Cruises and Holland America Line all organize charity walks round the deck to raise funds for the fight against cancer. The Make A Wish Foundation is the chosen charity for rival giants Norwegian Cruise Line and Royal Caribbean.

We want to know about the charities supported during cruise holidays and would like to hear from passengers who have organised or taken part in events, and from cruise lines about their pet projects. Email us at info@worldofcruisingmagazine.com



ANDY HARMER is the UK and Ireland director of the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) which represents the cruise industry.

Something for everyone

Earlier this month, I went to Germany to see two of the world's newest cruise ships under construction.

Royal Caribbean International's Quantum of the Seas and Anthem of the Seas are being built at the Meyer Werft yard in Papenburg, with Quantum due to enter service later this year, and Anthem making her inaugural voyage next spring.

Both ships can accommodate just over 4,000 passengers and seeing them at different stages of construction highlighted what incredible feats of engineering they are.

Quantum and Anthem, for example, will feature an observation capsule that extends 300 ft into the air, giving passengers a bird's eye view of their ship and its passage through the oceans, a skydiving simulator and the largest indoor activity space at sea with dodgem cars, a circus school and roller skating.

These ships will be smarter too, with amenities ranging from wi-fi fast enough to stream videos, to virtual balcony views and a concierge service controlled through a passenger's electronic device.

This is what today's cruise passengers can increasingly expect to find when they step on board as the cruise lines continually innovate to enhance the on-board experience.

Making all of these on board experiences a reality requires incredible organisation and attention to detail. The cruise lines invest millions not only in the ships that sail our oceans and rivers, but in training the crews that man them.

It's the focus on service that ensures that cruise holidays have one of the highest satisfaction levels in leisure travel.

We are looking forward to seven new ocean ships launching next year ranging in size from just 264 passengers through to just over 4,000 so there's certainly a cruise style to suit everyone. I hope a cruise holiday will be on your horizon soon.

With best wishes, Andy

Is independence a good thing?

asks **EDWINA LONSDALE**

Everyone has a view, whether it is the referendum that failed to bring Scotland's breakaway from the Union or Norwegian's Cruise Line's \$3 billion purchase of Prestige Cruise Holdings.

I hear that following the announcement, Oceania was immediately inundated with messages from passengers telling the senior management they had made a bad decision. The knee-jerk reaction is always that big is bad, particularly when it comes to cruise line management, not least because customer loyalty to cruise line

brands is so passionately ingrained that the customers begin to think they actually own the brand – eat your hearts out, Gucci.

I well remember the first flurry of mergers and acquisitions in the late 80s and 90s, which resulted in the ultimate demise of some of the fledgling cruise industry's best-loved brands: Sitmar and Royal Viking Line spring immediately to mind.

Carnival Corporation stood out with their ability to welcome a company into the fold and leave the values of each brand intact, while bringing synergies in IT, purchasing and processes resulting in bottom line benefits.


The turnaround at Norwegian has been extraordinary, but recent challenges relating to the downward pressure on Caribbean pricing have highlighted the weakness of a company with a limited area of operation, and it is no surprise that the share price leapt by 12 per cent as soon as the deal was announced.

What we see in this deal is the merging of companies that already have very strong management and plenty of financial acumen, whereas historically weaker companies have been snapped up by stronger ones. So long as the new structure ensures strong independent management heading up each brand in the group, this is a deal which represents a win for all stakeholders, passengers included. //



EDWINA LONSDALE is managing director of Mundy Cruising, the UK's oldest cruise-only retailer, selling luxury cruises since 1970





Molecular makeover

Does Crystal gastronomy still reign serene? With the addition of smoking guns and micro purees, sous vide and street food with attitude, Crystal Cruises' menus have been given a long-awaited update. **GARY BUCHANAN**, sceptical about whether one swallow makes a dinner, puts them to the test

Excellence is inherent in the DNA of Crystal Cruises; as for cuisine, virtuosity is evident in every atom. When Crystal Serenity emerged from her \$17 million 'extreme makeover' at the end of last year it wasn't just enhancements to passenger accommodation that raised the bar. Crystal took the opportunity to reevaluate the 'fine' in fine dining and embrace the doctrines of molecular gastronomy.

In a mission to conceive a resolutely memorable dining experience the company pulled out all the stops and sought new realms to create innovative and exciting dishes for the Crystal Dining Room. Toni Neumeister, Vice President of Food and Beverage explained the ethos behind the new concept. "Seasoned diners' palattes have become increasingly sophisticated.

Our latest expansion may be our biggest gastronomic change ever, but it's also an incredibly exciting gift to our guests that we've been anxiously waiting to unwrap."

Four years in the making, these pursuits of Neumeister and his team of Crystal chefs have yielded a menu of Modern Cuisine that features new twists on old favourites. By employing new high-tech galley equipment and a wider variety of locally-sourced ingredients the culinary array has been elevated to a whole new level of taste, texture, aroma and beauty.

At the forefront of Modern Cuisine is a technique called sous vide which is a gentle method of cooking that preserves the delicate taste and texture of food. New gadgets include the Pacojet which, by creating a micro-puree, makes fresh and deep-frozen foods ultra-light while retaining their natural flavours. Another gizmo in the chef's arsenal is a smoking gun which in addition to enhancing taste also adds drama to dishes such as Wagu Beef Crudo, where, when a glass dome is raised in front of the guest, wisps of smoke and tantalising aromas are released.

For this revolutionary redesign, Neumeister called on some outside expertise including Kyle Connaughton, former head chef of Research and Development at



Heston Blumenthal's Fat Duck in Berkshire, and Gerard Bertholon, the world's top precision temperature cooking consultant. After extensive research and development, plus sourcing, purchasing and redesigning onboard spaces, Crystal chefs spent more than a year in training, conceptualising and holding 'menu summits' on board to create the new programme.

Neumeister takes up the story, "The chefs experimented and refined the process by playing, creating, bonding, challenging and even a little arguing. At first, you don't believe that applying these modern techniques can produce such wonderful results. Then you see, taste and feel – and ultimately believe."

I got the opportunity to put the new menus to the test when I sailed aboard *Serenity* this summer. The leather-bound folder brought to my table in the Crystal Dining Room contained two menus. On the right are the traditional offerings with a classic multi-course array featuring several appetisers, soups, salad, pastas, main courses and side orders; on the left it was the Modern Cuisine selection that

piqued my curiosity. From this array I made my selection: Tomato Tartar, Beetroot and Quail Egg; followed by Pan-Seared Baby Halibut, Cockles Dill Chowder, Snow Peas and Potatoes; rounded off with a Mango Pavlova. I started to muse on the mysteries of 'extra-sensory' dining.

During other nights of my cruise I sampled several appetisers such as Trio of Oysters, Pickled Shallots, Cucumber Sherbet and Oyster Espuma; and White Tomato Mousse Soup with Gin and Pumpnickel. Enticing main courses included Pan-Fried Bering Sea Turbot, Shrimp Ravioli and Tarragon-Saffron Fumet; and Creekstone Farms Black Angus Beef with Horseradish Mascarpone and Morel Foam. Desserts ranged from Delice of Valrhona Chocolate and Raspberry with Chocolate Mousse and French Raspberry Macaroon; to Almond Tart, Marinated Berries, Cotton Candy Dome and Strawberry Consommé.

Before actually sampling this array of culinary creations I had been sceptical. I was concerned that the menu would be a pretentious scroll of asinine bravado, while the food would pay homage to on-plate architecture sullied by unsuitable marriages between incompatible cuisines, conveniently forgetting that one swallow doesn't make a dinner. What I savoured nightly were creations at the sharp end of conscientious cuisine, prepared in a contemporary, delicate way, overflowing with delicacy and panache, without being irredeemably twee.

To learn more I sought the perspective of Austrian-born Executive Chef Franz Weiss who has been with Crystal Cruises for more than 21 years and was a member of the culinary team's Chef Summit. He explained there is a 14-night rotation of dishes in the Modern Cuisine menus, each offers two appetisers; one soup; two main courses (one

fish, one meat); and one dessert. Each is cooked à la minute. This self-effacing chef pointed out, "The Modern Cuisine menu includes staples from the Crystal Cruises' culinary repertoire, but with a modern interpretation." He continues, "Our guests are still very conservative, but in general they are enjoying exploring the Modern Cuisine options. As the cruise progresses guests are happy to dip in and out of the creative choices; however an increasing number of guests – mostly younger ones – select from the Modern Cuisine menu every night. Our repeat guests still tend to opt for classic dishes such as Dover Sole; Coq au Vin; and Wiener Schnitzel, but once they realise lobster tails and beef tenderloin are part of the Modern Cuisine menus they become more adventurous."

Perhaps Toni Neumeister sums up Crystal's mindset towards Modern Cuisine best: "We're excited, our guests are excited, and the overall value of our efforts is priceless – literally price-less. Even for the world's biggest foodies, a dinner of this calibre might be something they do once a week at a cost of hundreds of pounds. On Crystal, guests can indulge in cutting-edge culinary exploration every single night while they also explore the world – all for no extra charge."

Always the innovator, Crystal Cruises also used the recent refurbishment to redesign the space formerly occupied by the Trident Pool. Most striking is the lush greenery in the form of multiple variegated 'living walls' of plants and live olive trees under-planted with lavender, surrounded by fret-cut, internally-lit sculptures with thyme and rosemary motifs.

On the starboard side, Tastes features a casual restaurant, bar and custom-built display kitchen. Open during the day for 'Late Risers Breakfasts' and lunch including specialties such as Chinese noodles and dumplings, the restaurant is



Previous page: Scallop Duo
This page clockwise from top left: Sea Bass Artichoke,
King Crab with Seabass & Red Beet 'Couscous',
Swordfish with Zucchini Roulette

transformed in the evening into a cool and casual eatery with dramatic lighting that showcases trees, plants and decorative screens. The new globally-inspired menu was created in association with the Sapphire Restaurant in Laguna Beach, California.

Idined family-style with friends, savouring a collation that included Ahi Tuna Poke; Hamachi Crudo; Alsatian Tarte; Spinach Quesadillas; California Street Tacos; Butternut Squash Ravioli; Saffron Marinated Lamb Kebabs; Chimichurri Steak; and Dark Chocolate Crème Brûlée. The varied menu endorsed the tenet that after sweet, sour, salt and bitter, novelty has become the fifth element of taste. This was tapas-style street food with attitude.

The convivial Lido Café has also been transformed. This breakfast and lunch buffet venue on Deck 12 has undergone a complete reboot with modern food islands rather than long counters. With a palette of denim and ochre this bright room has additional tables for two beside the floor-to-ceiling windows.

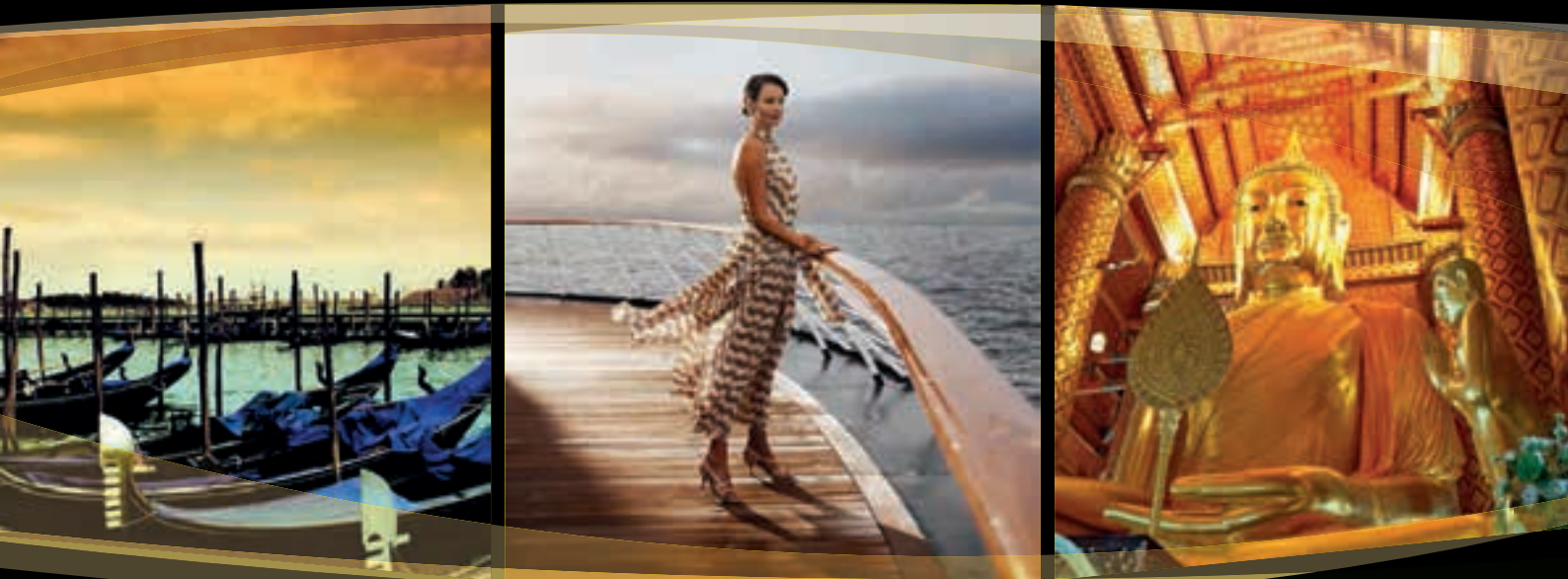
Crystal appreciate there are few cruising highlights more cherished than cuisine, and the incomparable Silk Road features signature dishes created by famed master-chef Nobuyuki Matsuhisa such as the delicious Nobu-Style Saikyo Miso Marinated and Broiled Black Cod with Mountain Peach and Young Ginger, which I was reliably informed is a favourite of Robert de Niro. Created by American celebrity chef, Piero Selvaggio, Prego's menu is implicit rather than wordy and overflows with specialties from the culinary colossus that is Italy. I savoured Carpaccio of Black Angus Beef; Homemade Asparagus Ravioli; and Scaloppine Di Vitello con Cappellini Pasta. Bellissimo!

By subtle alchemy, the Crystal Cruises' culinary blend of profound quality and infinite variety is an allegory for life's gustatory pleasures and when it comes to molecular gastronomy – they offer an accelerated particle. //



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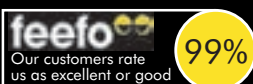
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Grilled Ahi tuna steak with apple cider soy butter

INGREDIENTS

4 Ahi tuna steaks, 5 oz each

APPLE CIDER SOY BUTTER VINAIGRETTE:

½ cup apple cider vinegar

½ cup apple juice

1 cup apple cider

2 tbsp soy sauce

1 oz butter, cold and cubed

Salt to taste

Freshly ground white pepper to taste

CHIVE OIL:

1 cup olive oil

4 oz chives

AHI POKE:

4 oz Sashimi grade tuna,

cut into ½-inch cubes

1 tbsp diced red onions

1 tbsp thin sliced spring onions

3 tsp fresh ginger juice

2 tsp soy sauce

2 tsp fresh lime juice or yuzu juice

1 tsp white sesame seed, toasted

2 tsp sesame oil

2 tsp Ao Tosaka seaweed,

chopped (optional)

Salt to taste

FOR GARNISH:

2 cups steamed rice

1 baby bok choy, divided into single leaves

Sesame oil

Salt to taste

METHOD

To make the vinaigrette, reduce apple juice, cider vinegar and apple cider together by ¾ in volume. Add the soy sauce and whisk in the butter. Season with salt and pepper to taste and keep warm. Then make the chive oil. Place olive oil and chives in a blender and blend for at least 3 minutes. Strain through a fine sieve. Combine all ingredients of the Ahi Poke in a bowl and season with salt to taste.

ASSEMBLY

1. Grill the tuna steaks to desired temperature.
2. Sauté the bok choy leaves in a pan in little sesame oil until just cooked, season to taste with salt
3. Place the tuna steaks into shallow bowl.
4. Divide the poke into four portions and place on top of tuna.
5. Surround with apple-soy butter and drizzle with chive oil.
Garnish with steamed rice and bok choy

NUTRITION FACTS PER SERVING

Calories: 190

Total Fats (g): 15

Cholesterol (mg): 15

Sodium (mg): 234

Total Carbohydrates (g): 16

Dietary Fibre (g): 0.25

Sugar (g): 1.06

Protein (g): 8.75



Around the world in many ways

By Silver Travel Advisor cruise expert **ALAN FAIRFAX**

The excitement mounts, an atmosphere of happiness, joy and expectation encompasses the ship. Luggage is stowed, boat drill finished, passengers gather on deck, ignoring the cold, with cocktails, flutes of Champagne. Streamers fly, a band is playing on the quayside as the last gangway is disengaged from the ship. Three long blasts on the ship's whistle as it eases away from the quayside to begin the journey down Southampton Water to the open sea. What is so different about this from any other cruise? Simple, this is a World Cruise.

Each year, typically in January, the liners of Cunard and P&O leave their homeport of Southampton to circumnavigate the world. These

voyages, are in some cases in excess of 100 nights away before returning to the UK in the Spring. Some go east and some go west but whichever you choose they offer a great way to avoid the British winter and enjoy the sunshine in locations that up until now may have only been dreams. The mysteries of the Middle East, a return to the days of The Raj on the Indian Continent, Malaysia, Australia and my personal dream area, the islands of the Pacific. Those places made famous by the films, South Pacific, Mutiny on the Bounty and many more. Silver sand beaches, crystal clear waters and friendly peoples. Need I say more?

Next year Fred Olsen joins the long voyage market with Balmoral



offering exciting new destinations. Leaving Southampton on 4 January and visiting 54 different ports. Exotic locations in India, China, Japan, Vietnam, Burma, Malaysia and many more before returning to Southampton 119 nights later. Holland America's Amsterdam embarks on a world cruise in January 2015. Starting at Fort Lauderdale it heads to South America, French Polynesia, the Cook Islands, Tonga, New Zealand, Australia, India and many more before returning to Florida 114 nights later.

Not everyone wants to be on a ship for that long and others have limited budgets. Cruise companies accommodate them by splitting

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their world cruises into sectors of various lengths. If, however, you want something even longer, Oceania Cruises offer a voyage of 182 nights next July, beginning and ending in Miami.

Have I whetted your appetite? I hope so. A world cruise is the ultimate in cruising for many people. Circumnavigate the world, visit exotic locations, and having to unpack only once. Have a great time. //

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear WoC

Just to say thanks once again for the copy I had missed. We really like your magazine, having received it for a number of years. It is worth every penny of the subscription for all the information your crew seem to find about everything we hardened cruisers should know.

I see you have had a few changes recently but with John Honeywell as the Editor you surely cannot go far wrong as we have always enjoyed his informative ramblings on all things nautical. After 33 cruises we are venturing on our first river cruise on the Danube with Viking. From what we hear we should enjoy ourselves.

Meanwhile I look forward to the next copy of the magazine.

Linda Marshall
Irby, Wirral,
Merseyside

The Editor writes:

Thank you for your kind words, Linda. We hope you enjoy your first river cruise as much as you enjoy reading World of Cruising.

Send your letters for publication to
john.honeywell@worldofcruisingmagazine.com

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NOVELIST RUTH RENDELL ON SAGA CRUISE

Crime writer Ruth Rendell will be headlining Saga's Meet-the-Author series on Saga Sapphire's Baltic Treasures cruise in May 2015. More formally known as Baroness Rendell of Babergh, Lady Rendell is celebrating the 50th anniversary of her career as an author. She will take part in a Q&A session with passengers who will each receive a copy of her new novel *The Girl Next Door*. The best-selling novelist travels the world but has chosen Saga for her first luxury cruise. She said: "I never usually take holidays but this one looked rather nice."

CRUISE SHIP SLICED IN TWO

Work has started on MSC Cruises' €200 million (£160 million) project to stretch four of the line's ships. The first, MSC Armonia, was cut in two in a dry dock in Palermo, Sicily, over the next few weeks a pre-fabricated 24 metre mid-section will be welded in place, adding extra cabins, public rooms, and crew space. The Renaissance Project will then repeat the procedure on sister ships MSC Sinfonia, MSC Opera, and MSC Lirica, all built between 2003 and 2005. They are each 251 metres long, measuring 60,000 gross tons, and carrying 2,199 passengers. After the lengthening, they will be 275 metres long, 65,000 gross tons, and with an extra 193 cabins, a total passenger capacity of 2,679. The work involves each ship being cut in two just forward of the funnel, and then separated to make way for the new section.

MULTI-MILLION ART COLLECTION FOR BRITANNIA

P&O Cruises' new ship Britannia will boast Britain's largest floating art collection, containing more than 8,000 artworks, when it launches in March next year. The multi-million art collection represents a new approach by the company with works having been chosen to complement and enhance Britannia's interior designs to give the feel of a luxury hotel. Pieces ranging from paintings and bronze sculptures to ceramics and paper wall reliefs have been created by a wide variety of artists – most of them British – with some from as far afield as Japan, Australia and South Africa.

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BURMA



RISING

By ANTHONY NICHOLAS





Previous page:
Shwedagon Pagoda
in the evening light
(Picture by
RUSSELL
HONEYWELL)

This page, from top:
U Bein Bridge
at sunset,
RV Katha Pandaw,
a young devotee
at Shwedagon



IN OUR NEXT ISSUE
Gary Buchanan samples
a cruise on the Irrawaddy
aboard Belmond's
luxurious Orcaella

Myanmar or Burma? Whatever name you choose to use, this ancient, stunningly beautiful country is in the process of being rediscovered by the travelling public. As it opens up and becomes more accessible, both mainstream and river cruise lines are jumping at the chance to showcase the sights of this lush, magical Asian jewel.

And what sights they are. From the shimmering, ethereal serenity of ancient Shwedagon, with its staggeringly impressive golden stupas, and monks clad in saffron robes, to the old colonial buildings that line the waterfront of fabled Rangoon, Burma is like a gigantic time capsule. An incredible, incense-suffused series of paradoxes and looming pagodas, rising out of tracts of dense jungle that tumbles down along both banks of the serpentine sprawl of the ancient Irrawaddy river. Few things can top an early morning balloon flight, ghosting over the great temples of Bagan as sunrise flits across the sky.

Shwedagon itself is like some enormous, Buddhist theme park; at once stupendous and serene. See it at sunset, as the last rays of the day shimmer on the elegant, golden spires and strings of brilliant, coloured lanterns sway silently in the gathering dusk. It truly is the stuff of dreams.

The country is a highlight of many itineraries offered by the more cerebral, destination-orientated cruise lines. Many, including the likes of Swan Hellenic and Voyages To Antiquity, offer stays of several nights in Yangon (Rangoon) and each has an inclusive package of shore excursions as part of the price. The smaller size of these ships allows them to dock right in the city centre.

Voyages to Antiquity's ship, Aegean Odyssey, returns to Rangoon in January, for a two-night stay during a cruise from Sri Lanka to Singapore, and again in March during a 16-day round-trip cruise from Singapore.

More mainstream, Fred. Olsen Cruise Line's Balmoral will also be including an overnight stay in Yangon on her 2015 Far East cruise from Southampton. Holland America Line is offering three, 14-night round trip cruises from Singapore on the Volendam this winter, each including an overnight stay in Yangon. Seabourn Odyssey will be there this November on a 14-night voyage from Singapore.

On the river, Belmond offers a series of seven to 12-night cruises aboard the deluxe MV Orcaella, as well as various itineraries on the luxurious, long established Road To Mandalay. AMA Waterways showcases a 'Golden Treasures of Burma' cruise on the 56 passenger AmaPura. Ubiquitous Viking River Cruises also has some Burma options. Pandaw River Cruises offer another authentic experience; typically carrying around 55 passengers, these vessels are beautifully crafted river boats. Another deluxe, intimate option is Abercrombie and Kent's Sanctuary Ananda, which offers four and seven night sailings on the Irrawaddy.

Whichever way you see Burma, it will stay with you long after you actually leave. //

Burma and the treasures of Malaysia

Vibrant Singapore, Thailand's natural wonders, ancient Burma and historic Malaysia

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SINGAPORE TO SINGAPORE 27 FEBRUARY 2015

DATE	PORT	ARRIVE	DEPART
FEB 27	Depart UK		
FEB 28	Arrive SINGAPORE		
	Transfer to hotel		overnight hotel
MAR 1	SINGAPORE		overnight hotel
MAR 2	SINGAPORE		
	Embark <i>Aegean Odyssey</i>		6.00pm
MAR 3	PORT KELANG Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur)	1.00pm	8.00pm
MAR 4	At Sea		
MAR 5	PHUKET Thailand (Phi Phi Islands)	7.00am	8.00pm
MAR 6	At Sea		
MAR 7	YANGON Burma	6.00pm	overnight
MAR 8	YANGON Burma		overnight
MAR 9	YANGON Burma		6.00pm
MAR 10/11	Cruise through the Nicobar Islands		
MAR 12	PENANG Malaysia	8.00am	6.00pm
MAR 13	MALACCA Malaysia	2.00pm	7.00pm
MAR 14	SINGAPORE		6.00am
	Transfer to Singapore Airport for flight home		



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WORLD OF SPAS



Just keep it simple

Much as I love spas, sometimes they can be simply exhausting – and that's from just reading the treatment menu. There is too much jargon and too many confusing descriptions of what are essentially very simple treatments. Take 'journey' – there is hardly a spa on the planet that doesn't offer a journey, which involves a scrub or a bath, a wrap and a massage and a facial or manicure thrown in for good measure. To me, this doesn't conjure up a journey. It is NOT a journey, I have just made a journey to get to the spa, I know what a journey is, now I'm in a spa, I want to lie down. The same goes for 'ritual' another spa special. As far as the dictionary is concerned a ritual is a series of actions in a prescribed order, mostly in a religious ceremony. A mud wrap and massage? I don't think so. All I want to say to spa providers is – keep it simple, and tell it like it is. Most of these treatments are great in themselves, they don't need poshing up.

Properly Posh

Seabourn has upgraded its spa offering in both the Odyssey and the Quest with four specially-designed penthouse spa suites. Sister ship Seabourn Sojourn will be upgraded early next year. Located on the deck above the spa (replacing what was an area of sun deck), and with special access via spiral staircase, these suites are for those who want to make full use of the spa facilities during their time at sea. All are super-spacious with large private verandas and come complete with two in-suite bars, one offering standard drinks and mixers, the other with healthy drinks and snacks.
www.seabourn.co.uk

Peace of Mind

Healthy holidays are what we all look forward to, which is why medical help on board is always so important. MSC Cruises have gone one better and offer a distance diagnostic service, with video-link consultations to specialists and hospitals. Recently a paediatric service has been added, which is linked to the Giannina Gaslini Institute in Genoa, a world renowned centre in its field, so now help for all the family is available. Hopefully no one will need it, but knowing it is there is a great way to assist peace of mind.
www.msccruises.co.uk



Glamour times

Little Dix Bay, one of the most glamorous resorts in the Caribbean, is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. To help celebrate it has partnered with sexy designer Heidi Klein for its own exclusive range of swimsuits and cover-ups. While you can buy the stuff at Heidi Klein in London, what better than to head for the resort and its Sense spa where you can indulge in a Virgin Gorda Milk and Honey Wrap before treating yourself to a Heidi special – there are 10 pieces to choose from.

www.rosewoodhotels.com



Uptown Girl

If there is one designer who epitomises New York it has to be Donna Karan, and her latest fragrance is dedicated to her favourite city – DKNY MYNY. A fresh and lively fusion of creamy musk, pink pepper, filtered through jasmine and patchouli with hints of raspberry and freesia it's a scent with a universal appeal to the young at heart – in fact everything that New York means. And it was introduced at that most iconic of locations, Madison Square Gardens by a true uptown gal – Rita Ora. From £53.70 at all DKNY outlets.



Super rich

For more than a decade one of our favourite moisturisers has been Elemis' Pro Collagen Marine Cream, now they have released a super-hydrating version for more mature skins. In tests its powerful cocktail of anti-ageing ingredients shows that it has reduced the appearance of wrinkles in just 15 days. These ingredients include not just collagen, but seaweeds, Elemis's signature algae, padina pavonica along with cocoa butter, ginkgo biloba, and sunflower extracts. Use it twice daily, but sparingly for best results. £80 at Elemis stockists.



Gold Rush

Oudh is one of the most expensive – and exotic – oils in the world, and comes from agarwood which is grown in the north-east Indian state of Assam. Old favourites Molton Brown have incorporated it in their newest collection of bath and body products – Oudh Accord and Gold. To maintain the sheer luxury of it all, gold flakes have been added and suspended in the body wash to highlight its anti-ageing properties. If you can't wear it, wash in it. Prices from £20 at Harrods and selected stockists



Autumn Glow

Brooke Shields has joined forces with MAC and launched her own colour collection – an amazing palette of rich autumnal shades of russet and gold, brown and deep plum. There are 15 eye shadows in all, brow liners and cheek stains, lipsticks and gloss alongside mascaras and nail polish. It's a look that is both vibrant yet wearable. Prices start from £10.20. Available at Mac stockists.

Wakey Wakey

Feeling tired and looking sleepy? Then Origins new facemask will help your skin look as if you've just jumped out of bed full of energy. For a great quick boost, smooth in on over clean skin, leave for 10 minutes and tissue off. Its icy cool formula contains both caffeine and cucumber for energy. It's a great pick-me-up before a night out. GinZing Refreshing face mask from £23.



Fitness forever?

Most of us are full of good intentions when it comes to our health – eating properly and staying fit. All of which seems much easier in the summer with its huge choice of fresh produce and also when more of our body is on display. But the trouble starts when the days get cooler and out come sweaters, jacket and coats to cover up. This is when we tend to forget our good intentions. However there is always a spa somewhere offering ways to help us along.

JO FOLEY reports



Keeping fit when the weather begins to cool is as easy as it is when the sun shines; it is simply that our minds turn to indoor pursuits and mostly not to the treadmill or Pilates but to the telly and the biscuit tin. But we know we feel better, have more energy and look better when we indulge in even a little exercise. The latest research shows that walking is one of the best exercises we can do and is something we can easily add to our daily routine. OK, 10,000 steps a day is best – and there are easy ways to measure them now – but you can work your way up to it. Start by simply getting off the bus a stop or two before you need to and walking the rest of the way, or taking the stairs instead of the lift – especially when cruising on one of today's mega-ships. If you have already fallen back into your old ways here are a few places to help.





Head for Hilton Syon Park, a grand house with spectacular grounds (great for walks, jogs and runs) and the Kallima Spa with its wide range of pampering treatments and therapies. Should you want a little more encouragement they have teamed up with British Military Fitness to offer bootcamp weekends throughout the winter. Here for three days you will be taken through a whole series of workouts, physical challenges, pool and gym sessions alongside a programme of nutritional and motivational seminars. Should you have the energy, you can recover each day in the spa with a massage. Cost £499 for three days, full board. Or if you can't get away, find a BMF class at one of their 130 venues around the UK. Remember though – this is not for cissies.

www.britmilfit.com

For something a little softer, head off to the north-west coast of St Lucia for the aptly named BodyHoliday. Here you can do as much or as little as you wish, but with the warm blue of the Caribbean Sea and near constant sunshine, why not enjoy what is on offer? There is plenty to choose from – yoga, Pilates, stretch, beach boot camp, aqua aerobics, zumba, circuit training, mountain biking, scuba, snorkelling, tennis, golf. There's a total of 40 activities to choose from each day. Plus there are personal trainers as well as meditation teachers and a host of spa treatments. Better yet, it is all-inclusive.

www.thebodyholiday.com

For something a little more challenging, then look towards Marrakech. The super luxury Palais Namaskar has a choice of Champion Spirit Fitness Retreats which include Thai boxing with world champion Abdoulay

Fidaga, as well as a selection martial arts and Tahiti dance programmes from November until next May. Each programme runs for five nights with the martial arts version including a personalised diet programme, massages and yoga. The Thai boxing one is much more rigorous with circuit training, rock climbing, hiking and zip lining to guarantee you return fitter, leaner and healthier.

www.palaisnamaskar.com

For something a little gentler but just as demanding, head to the Maldives and W resort on Fesdu island, where celebrity yoga queen Tara Stiles will hold a week-long yoga retreat. This is the woman who includes Jane Fonda and Deepak Chopra among her clients. Each day begins with sunrise yoga on the beach and ends with meditation and overwater yoga sessions. In between are signature spa treatments, stretching and breathing classes.

www.turquoiseolidays.co.uk



Above: Star of the screen? Royal Princess cruise director Sam Hawker-Thomas

Opposite: Azores in her new CMV livery

Wish YOU were on TV?

In early November, I'll be flying to Florida and the naming ceremony of Regal Princess. The ship has been sailing unchristened around the Mediterranean this summer, largely because sister ship Royal Princess set the bar so high last year.

It would have been impossible to match the spectacle and the TV coverage generated when the Duchess of Cambridge cut a blue ribbon to send a bottle of Champagne crashing against the ship's side on a breezy June day in Southampton.

So Regal has had to wait. The big day will come on November 5 in her new homeport of Fort Lauderdale. Instead of just one godmother, she'll have a handful of godparents – some of the surviving cast members from the TV soap *The Love Boat*, which used a couple of earlier Princess ships as filming locations during the 70s.

Which brings us back to the hot topic of cruise ships on television, which I remarked upon in the last issue.

Soapy sit-com *The Love Boat* was a huge hit, particularly in the United States, and is widely credited with sparking a boom in cruising as a holiday option. The TV exposure it provided sent thousands of Americans scurrying to travel agents and cruise lines looking for fun and games in the Caribbean sunshine.

Ever since then, cruise lines have been seeking the Holy Grail of TV publicity, yet in most cases have

failed spectacularly. One early series made a star out of Jane McDonald but did little to raise the profile of Celebrity Cruises.

Another series filmed on board *Island Escape* demonstrated disaster after disaster, and the one which followed *Stelios Haji-Ioannou's EasyCruise* showed exactly why the venture was so short-lived.

TV producers want to inject drama and tension into their programmes, however artificial it might be; they did so even in a *National Geographic* series which attempted to convince viewers that a fuel sample might fail a routine analysis and jeopardise an entire week's sailing, and they did it again by trying to show chaos in *Royal Princess's* laundry would put an end to the Captain's gala welcome party.

On the other hand, last year's series filmed on board a *Fred. Olsen* world cruise was so lacking in tension that it threatened to send viewers to sleep.

The big problem is that in most cases, people who have never been on a cruise turn away from the screen saying "I told you it would be like that, you'll never get me on one of those ships." While frequent cruisers reply that what we are seeing is nothing like the cruises they go on.

Marketing bosses at *Olsen and Princess* are adamant that sales enquiries increased, despite any negative spin in the shows filmed

 @CaptGreybeard


on their ships, and Princess were delighted their programme was given a prime time slot between two episodes of Coronation Street.

UK managing director Paul Ludlow says there have been many spin-offs from the show – from previews and reviews, and mentions in a range of magazines – that the raised awareness among the general public can already be counted as a success.

He counts the social media reaction, particularly on Twitter, as another success – ignoring the fact that rivals Royal Caribbean hijacked the hashtag #thecruiseship to launch their own guerrilla marketing campaign.

Seasoned observer Tony Peisley – who is, ironically, a former scriptwriter for BBC holiday programme Wish You Were Here – takes a different view.

His message to the cruise lines is to shun approaches from TV producers trying to make it look like they come bearing gifts of primetime exposure. “It pays to step back, review the whole situation and – in 99 per cent of cases – say ‘Thanks, but no thanks.’”

How do YOU think cruise lines have fared with the television exposure they have received? Is Tony Peisley right, or is there no such thing as bad publicity, and should cruise lines welcome any form of exposure on the small screen? //



Last voyage of Discovery

One of those two original Love Boats was Island Princess, still sailing today although under a different name. Discovery was a stalwart for Voyages of Discovery for a long time, until being handed over a couple of years ago to a joint venture with Cruise & Maritime Voyages.

I have fond memories of a 2011 cruise on Discovery from Dubrovnik to Istanbul – to this day, the wallpaper on my Twitter page is a shot of the monasteries of Meteora, taken during an excursion from the ship.

The ship has sailed her final cruise from the UK, and is now likely to be sold for scrap. C&MV’s last cruises of the season from Bristol are being fulfilled on Funchal, chartered from a Portuguese operator which is also providing the ship Azores for CMV next year.

It was built in 1948 as Stockholm, and has a history all of its own. In 1956, it collided with the liner Andrea Doria, which sank. Azores has had a succession of other names, and was rebuilt from the hull up in 1994.

Carrying up to 600 passengers, Azores will begin her service with C&MV with a 30-night voyage from Bristol to the Caribbean and during 2015 will also be sailing from Tilbury and Hull. //

The Telegraph
CRUISE SHOW
 11-12 OCTOBER ECHO ARENA LIVERPOOL 2014

What's the **BIG DEAL** about cruise shows anyway?

With cruising continuing to grow as a holiday option, it's no surprise that cruise shows are springing up around the country. What do they offer, and what is there to attract shoppers who could find the information online – if they knew where to look?



Who'll be there:

American Queen Steamboat Company • Crystal Cruises • Cunard • Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines • Noble Caledonia • Norwegian Cruise Line • P&O Cruises, Saga Cruises • Silversea Cruises • and many more.



What is the power of these exhibitions.

Just what is the big deal?

To answer that question, ask anyone who was at the Telegraph Cruise Show in London last January, many of whom will return to the ExCel Centre from January 9 to 11 next year.

The show provides an opportunity to smell, taste, listen and immerse yourself in cruise culture. Don't just take my word for it – Mary Stuart-Miller, who represents Oceania Cruises, AMAwaterways and Star Clippers says: "It's a fantastic day out and gives a unique opportunity to find out who's who in cruising, learn about the latest ships and destinations and get some great deals, all under one roof."

To me the show is somewhat like the country agricultural shows we get up here in Northumberland. I always make a beeline for the cookery demonstrations and food and wine theatre with its wine and whisky tasting sessions. It's an immersive day out; a chance to meet old friends, get excited and inspired about holiday options and take a bite to eat and a drink while you do it.

You simply can't find as much content online and in brochures anywhere else. With insight on destinations and ships from celebrity speakers, Telegraph travel writers and cruise experts – plus the first-hand knowledge from the cruise lines exhibiting – you'll have all your questions answered and more within a couple of hours. But the show is much more than just its list of exhibitors and speakers; it's the buzz that pulls you in you when you walk into the hall, the exciting entertainment and acts from the cruise lines, the exclusive show-only offers and competitions that include free cruises, complimentary on-board spending money, gifts, generous discounts and much more.

Why not get a treat whilst booking your holiday? Where else could you get a massage, gourmet food cooked by a celebrity chef or get to taste wine with a world-class expert while booking your holiday? Alex White, Princess Cruises head of sales, says: "The show gives guests the ideal opportunity to talk through their next cruise with our staff in person. It's always great to be able to give out information face-to-face and we look forward to welcoming people to our stand." The three days are designed to provide a taste of life on board, answer all your cruise and destination questions, provide inspiration and the latest information for your 2015 holiday whilst enjoying a fun day out.

Liverpool Show Win tickets!

Don't forget the Telegraph Cruise Show Liverpool takes place 11 – 12 October at the Echo Arena.

Meet the cruise lines, special offers and competitions, guest appearance from Alan Hansen and Kenny Dalglish, cookery demos from P&O Cruises' Michelin-starred chef Atul Kochhar, wine tasting, destination theatre and much more.

Win tickets by filling in your details at cruiseshow.telegraph.co.uk/wocwin before midnight 9 October.

Buy tickets at telegraph.co.uk/cruiseliverpool or call 0844 800 0400

Undecided about what sort of cruise holiday is right for you? Then bring your questions along to the one-to-one advice sessions, where impartial experts from CLIA (the Cruise Line International Association) will help find the cruise that's right for you.

They are the official trade organisation for the cruise industry and chairman Andy Harmer says: "The Show offers the perfect opportunity for those new to cruise and regular travellers to find their dream holiday. For first time cruisers, there are experts on hand to help assist with the many queries that are likely to be raised – which destination, style of cruise, size of ship, formal or informal, expedition or cultural? And for those

not so new, the show will highlight the very latest developments from both ocean and river cruise companies including exciting new itineraries and innovative ships. "

STEVE NEWMAN

To find out more, book tickets and sign up to the newsletter go to www.telegraph.co.uk/cruiselondon



Follow in Royal footsteps on a tour of historic Valletta



Colourful boats in Valletta harbour
Above: spectacular cliffs near the Blue Grotto

Thousands of cruise passengers each year marvel at the view (Pages 6 & 7) that the Duchess of Cambridge was forced to miss last month.

A visit to Malta for the 50th anniversary of the country's independence was planned as her first solo foreign engagement but her recently-announced pregnancy and persistent morning sickness forced her to cancel at the last minute. Husband Prince William stepped in to take the trip in her place.

He crossed the Grand Harbour in a typical Maltese boat called a dghajsa, passing beneath Cunard's Queen Victoria on the way. Passengers were out on their balconies waving their Union Jacks as he waved back. Also during his visit, Saga Sapphire passengers were in port to enjoy the spectacular firework display put on to mark the anniversary.

William might not have had much chance to see beyond Valletta to Malta's other attractions, which range from sandy beaches and blue grottoes, to pre-historic ruins even older than the Pyramids of Egypt. They are a magnet for visiting cruise passengers, who might also want

to follow in his footsteps on these excursions:

Stroll through Valletta:

The fortified capital of Malta, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is filled with grand examples of architecture and history and the vibrancy of a multicultural city. It will be European Capital City of Culture 2018.

Explore the city's cobbled streets and sun-dappled squares buzzing with rich military history and baroque cathedrals, through to fantastic shopping, café culture and cutting edge architecture. It's only a few steps from Caravaggio's superb 1608 depiction of the Beheading of St John the Baptist to the pub where actor Oliver Reed spent his final night drinking before he died of a heart attack while filming *Gladiator* in 1999.

The Duke visited Malta's prime minister at the Auberge de Castille – built in the 16th Century for the Knights of St John, and he attended a service in St John's Co-Cathedral.

Wander the Upper Barrakka Gardens

The official Independence Day reception was held at the Upper Barrakka Gardens, from where

cruise passengers can not only get a panoramic view of the Grand Harbour but also a bird's eye peek at their ship moored at the waterfront. There are lush green groves, imposing statues, and a spacious lawn with a line-up of cannon which once protected the city.

Boat trip around the Grand Harbour

Why not take a different view of Valletta on a boat trip around the Grand Harbour, just as the Duke did. Discover Malta's key moments in history while taking in the beauty of the Maltese coastline. Go a little further afield than William on a trip to the other side of the island and you could venture inside the fantastic Blue Grotto.

Discover one of the Three Cities

Across the other side of the Grand Harbour lie the Three Cities. William was taken on a visit to Birgu, also known as Vittoriosa, which played a vital part in the Siege of Malta in 1565 and still retains its impressive fortifications.

For more information, go to www.visitmalta.com

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Castries | Philipsburg | Miami

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Bangkok ✈️ to Istanbul ✈️ | 35-Day Voyage
15 April 2015 onboard *NAUTICA*

Bangkok ☹ | Singapore | Phuket | Rangoon ☹☹
Cochin (Kochi) | Mumbai ☹ | Salalah | Luxor (Safaga) ☹
Aqaba ☹ | Suez Canal Transit | Jerusalem (Haifa) ☹
Alanya | Rhodes | Istanbul

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New York ✈️ to Montreal ✈️ | 11-Day Voyage
7 May 2015 onboard *NAUTICA*

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Saint John (Bay of Fundy) | Halifax | Sydney
Saguenay | Quebec City | Montreal ☹

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SCANDINAVIAN TREASURES

Copenhagen ✈️ to Stockholm ✈️ | 10-Day Voyage
27 June 2015 onboard *MARINA*

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Helsinki | St. Petersburg ☹☹ | Tallinn | Stockholm

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ARTISTIC DISCOVERIES

Venice ✈️ to Barcelona ✈️ | 11-Day Voyage
25 July 2015 onboard *RIVIERA*

Venice | Koper | Zadar | Kotor | Palermo (Sicily)
Rome (Civitavecchia) | Florence/Pisa/Tuscany (Livorno)
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