

Cruise & Ferry

THE GLOBAL GUIDE TO PASSENGER SHIPPING

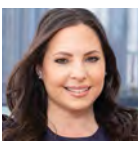
REVIEW

AW/24



LUXURY LINE

Achille Staiano and Koray Savas of Explora Journeys discuss boutique ships and exclusive excursions



PARTNERSHIPS

Andrea DeMarco on Regent Seven Seas Cruises' growth

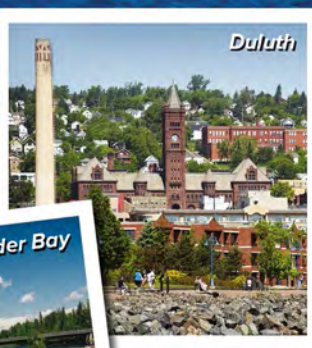


GREEN VISION

Pierfrancesco Vago of MSC Cruises talks sustainable cruising



Mackinac Island



Duluth



Thunder Bay



Milwaukee



Toronto



LAKE SUPERIOR

Duluth, Minn.

- Canal Park, 7.25 miles of Lakewalk and 5 top attractions
- Glensheen Mansion and Gardens, tours and intrigue
- All-freshwater aquarium

LAKE ERIE

Cleveland, Ohio

- Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, the city's No. 1 attraction
- Cleveland Museum of Art, great for groups
- Trolley tours through the city

LAKE HURON

Mackinac Island, Mich.

- Luxurious Grand Hotel with public dining
- Horse drawn carriage rides
- Rent bikes and lap the island

LAKE MICHIGAN

Muskegon, Mich.

- Heritage Landing ship dock, craft breweries, markets, public art
- Silversides Submarine Museum with beach coastline
- Historic district, museums, art and architecture tours

Milwaukee, Wisc.

- Harley Davidson Museum, a global icon and No. 1 city pick
- German beer and bratz
- Milwaukee Public Market and Riverwalk

Green Bay, Wisc.

- Lambeau Field and Green Bay Packers Hall of Fame, top attractions
- Green Bay Botanical Garden
- New public market on Fox River

Chicago, Ill.

- Navy Pier's public art, shopping and dining
- Chicago Architecture River Cruise, 2021 top attraction
- Millennium Park and its interactive fountains and gardens

Ports of Call



Explore the Great Lakes

THE GREAT LAKES ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY SYSTEM is a shared U.S.-Canadian waterway. Pristine rivers, lakes and channels make the Great Lakes a cruising destination that strikes the perfect balance between ocean travel and riverboating. The awe-inspiring experience includes traversing manmade locks that create more than 2,000 miles of inland cruising.

This growing hub for luxury cruises includes the clear water of the St. Lawrence River and all five freshwater Great Lakes. Picturesque ports are rich with historic, maritime and Midwestern charm. Prime attractions are closely located to berthing space. Unique onshore experiences immerse passengers in local history, art, architecture and native cultures. Port communities on the Great Lakes go out of their way to welcome cruise ships and their passengers as they sail in throughout the spring, summer and fall. Your passengers won't want to miss the unexplored experience on the freshwater seas.



SHIP FACTS

- About 1/3 of cruise vessels built today carry fewer than 400 passengers, providing a more intimate experience.
- Ships in the St. Lawrence Seaway are small enough to navigate the locks and channels, but large enough for superior handling and stability in rough seas.
- Maximum ship dimensions are length 225.50 m, beam 23.77 m and depth 8.08 m.



For information on transiting the locks and channels of the St. Lawrence Seaway or other Great Lakes destinations, contact:

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MSC

FOR A GREATER BEAUTY

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Foreword

New to cruise?

A recent report by J.P. Morgan delivers a positive outlook for cruise. “We see the industry growing revenues by high-single digits over the next five years, capturing approximately 3.8 per cent of the global vacation market by 2028,” says Matt Boss, head of leisure and retailing at the investment bank.

This in part he attributes to “accelerating new-to-cruise acquisition”, as lines overhaul their offerings to appeal to consumers. Boss highlights megaships and private destinations, and we would add a rapidly growing category to that list: expedition cruise.

This issue of *Cruise & Ferry Review* includes, from page 61, a special bound-in Expedition Cruise Business supplement, which explores the lines, ships and destinations that are drawing ever-increasing numbers of guests to this form of vacation. Akvile Marozaitė, the CEO of Expedition Cruise Network, tells us: “Each expedition has something unique to offer. Learning from experts about a place adds an extra dimension of wonder – these are perhaps the reasons why I fell in love with this form of travel.”

With itineraries encompassing some relatively untouched regions, expedition cruise lines are particularly conscious on the impact they have on the environment. But the whole industry is prioritising sustainability. “Our teams have been continuously analysing our operational data and processes to identify every possible opportunity for making energy-efficiency improvements,” says Pierfrancesco Vago of MSC Cruises, in our keynote interview (see page 10).

He also calls for regulators and governments to do their bit to accelerate the decarbonisation of the whole maritime industry. Modern consumers care deeply about the environment, and increasingly consider the impact of their spending choices. To draw in more new-to-cruise guests, and promote ferry travel over the alternatives, passenger shipping firms must not only take their own positive action, but also lobby legislators to support their efforts.

Jon Ingleton

Executive Editor, *Cruise & Ferry Review*



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Tudor Rose

Published by Tudor Rose
 Tudor House, 6 Friar Lane
 Leicester LE1 5RA
 Tel: +44 116 2229900
www.tudor-rose.co.uk

ISSN 2635-0475 (Print)
 ISSN 2635-0483 (Online)

Printed in Great Britain by The Manson Group.

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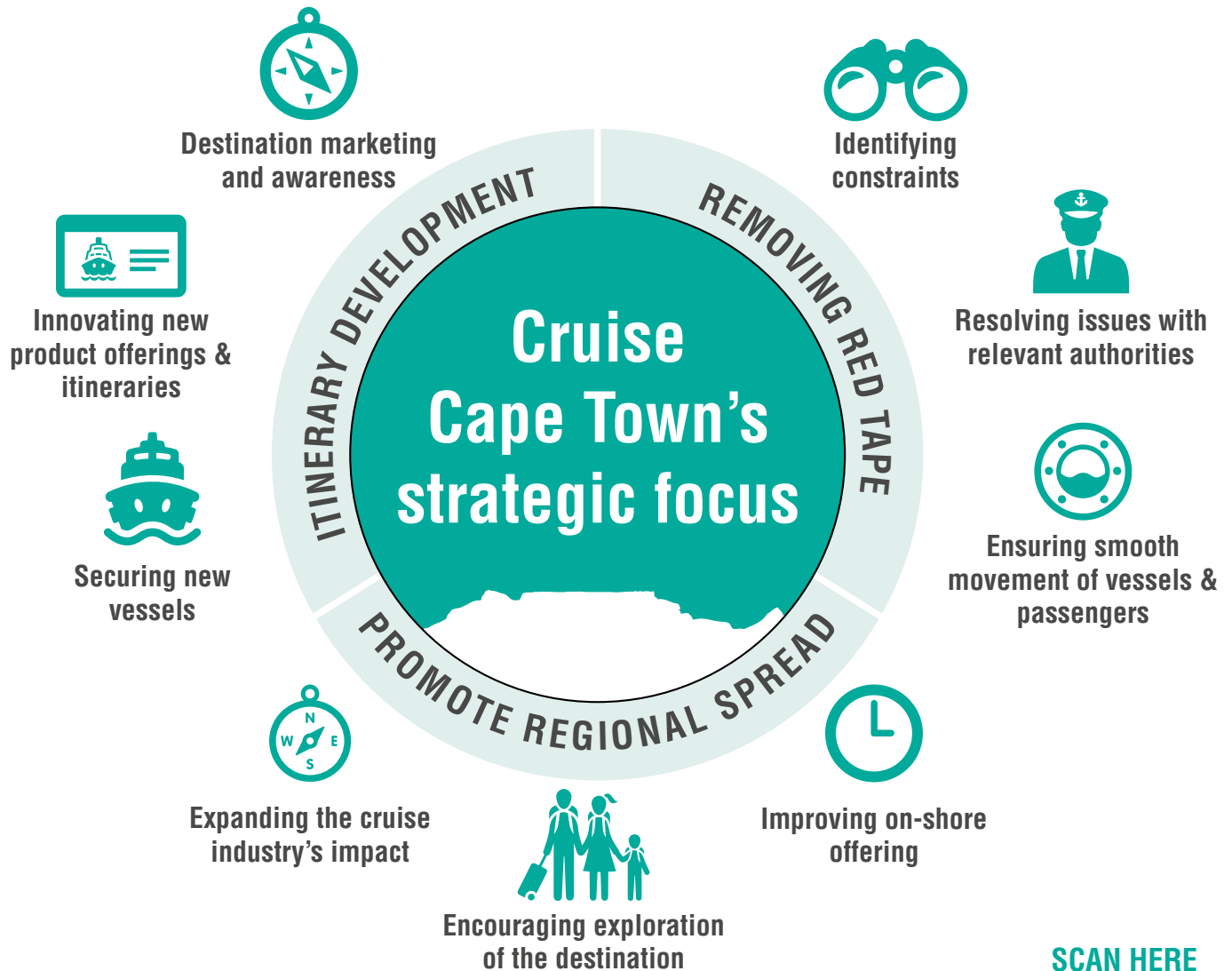
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Cape Town & the Western Cape

A Premier Cruise Destination Marketed by Cruise Cape Town

Cruise Cape Town, powered by Wesgro, aims to expand and promote cruise tourism in Cape Town and the Western Cape, South Africa.

A public-private collaboration, Cruise Cape Town seeks to boost the local economy by positioning the region as a premier cruise destination, whilst fostering sustainable tourism practices. At the heart of the project is a focus on community engagement and environmental conservation, ensuring visiting cruise liners leave a lasting positive legacy on the destination.



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Pushing the boundaries

Pierfrancesco Vago, executive chairman of MSC Cruises tells Rebecca Gibson how the company is helping to lead the cruise industry into a new era with its high-tech ships, pioneering environmental sustainability technologies and commitment to continually redefining the guest experience

MSC Cruises' 6,327-guest MSC Euribia marked a "paradigm shift for cruising" when it sailed the world's first net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions cruise in June 2023. The vessel embarked on a four-day maiden voyage from Chantiers de l'Atlantique's shipyard in Saint-Nazaire, France, to Copenhagen, Denmark, powered by bio-LNG fuel on a mass balance basis that had been produced from food waste.

Onboard teams used various technologies to optimise the vessel's speed profile, routing, trim, engine configuration, HVAC system, galleys, lighting, hotel operations, and more, which meant MSC Euribia only had to use two of its four engines. Meanwhile, all the required heat for galleys, heating systems and hot water was recovered from the ship's engines, eliminating the need to use the boilers. Consequently, MSC Euribia saved 43 tonnes of fuel, performing 11 per cent better than its digital twin – a virtual replica of the ship simulating optimal onboard energy use.

"MSC Euribia is one of the world's most energy-efficient cruise ships and this pioneering voyage proved that with the right technologies and fuel, it is possible to achieve net-zero GHG

emissions cruising today," says Vago. "Cruise brands are already implementing new technologies to optimise operations and cut energy consumption, but we can't achieve consistent net zero-emission cruising because cost-efficient renewable fuels are not yet widely available."

According to Vago, MSC Euribia's trial cruise demonstrated the growing demand from the cruise sector and the wider maritime industry for renewable fuels such as bio-LNG, synthetic LNG (known as e-LNG), green hydrogen or green methanol. He is campaigning for both regulators and governments to spearhead the renewable fuel agenda by developing an industry-wide strategy.

"When I first started talking about building large LNG-powered cruise ships for long itineraries 10 years ago, people looked at me like I was insane," says Vago. "Today, there are multiple cruise brands operating or building LNG-powered vessels, so we need energy providers who can produce renewable fuels and with appropriate delivery systems around the world."

"Governments and international organisations must lead the way by creating regulatory and financial incentives and encouraging cruise operators, fuel providers, technology

companies, ports and other key stakeholders to combine resources so we can build the necessary infrastructure and supply chain quickly. This, combined with continued technological advancements, will accelerate the decarbonisation of the industry and enable us to achieve consistent net-zero emissions cruising by the 2050 ambition set by the International Maritime Organization (IMO)."

In the meantime, MSC Cruises will continue to search for new technologies and solutions to optimise energy use on its existing and upcoming ships.

"For years, our teams have been continuously analysing our operational data and processes to identify every possible opportunity for making energy-efficiency improvements onboard our fleet to cut energy consumption, fuel use and emissions," says Vago. "We've invested in new technologies, changed the size and type of our engines, trialled fuel cells, improved how we operate HVAC, switched to LED lights, automated various onboard systems, installed advanced water treatment systems, introduced waste and recycling initiatives, and much more. We're also educating our crew members and guests about environmental sustainability to

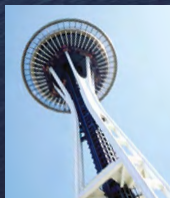
A middle-aged man with grey hair, wearing a dark blue suit, white shirt, and dark tie, stands with his arms crossed on the deck of a ship. The background shows the ship's structure and the sea.

“We can’t achieve consistent zero-emission cruising because cost-efficient renewable fuels are not widely available”

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MSC Euribia successfully sailed the world's first net-zero greenhouse gas emissions cruise between France and Denmark

ensure everyone plays a role in helping us achieve our net-zero goals.”

The company's 2023 sustainability report shows that these efforts are paying off. It reduced the carbon intensity of its fleet by 6.5 per cent in 2023, and has cumulatively decreased it by 37.8 per cent since 2008. This puts the company on track to achieve the IMO's 40 per cent reduction target ahead of the 2030 deadline. In addition, efficiency improvements have cut onboard water consumption from 226 litres per guest day to 187 litres in 2023, a fall of 17.2 per cent. Desalination systems also produced more than 6.4 million cubic metres of water in 2023, meeting 87.2 per cent of the fleet's onboard water needs.

Now, MSC Cruises is beginning to scrutinise ship interiors in the same way, aiming to eventually move to a circular design model. “We're already working with our shipyards, suppliers and subcontractors to calculate the carbon footprint of the items we use for the interiors of our vessels and taking this into account when sourcing the most environmentally sustainable options,” says Vago. “For example, MSC Euribia has recyclable carpets and signage made from recycled material. We plan to increase these efforts in future.”

The company is also one of several hundred signatories of the Sustainable Maritime Interiors (SMI) Declaration, which was launched in May 2023 to help drive sustainability improvements throughout the ship interior lifecycle. The declaration, which was created in full support of the UN Global Compact's Ten Principles, outlines seven commitments to champion environmental change and inspire other stakeholders to build and maintain more sustainable ship interiors.

“We applaud Cruise & Ferry's [executive editor] Jon Ingleton who was the driving force behind the initiative,” says Vago. “We join him in relentlessly championing the need for circular design in the passenger ship interiors industry and encourage other industry stakeholders to sign too.”

MSC Cruises hopes to further decrease itinerary-related emissions in future, using the new OptiCruise itinerary planning tool developed in collaboration with OPTIMEasy, a research company affiliated with the University of Genoa in Italy. The tool was trialled for 12 months onboard MSC Bellissima as it sailed between 17 Mediterranean ports. It calculates the optimal itinerary by analysing factors such as the sequence of port calls, departure and arrival

times, the ship's speed, the appeal of destinations and available shore excursions, and port charges and other operational costs.

“The OPTIMEasy team calculates that we can decrease fuel use and emissions by an average of 10 to 15 per cent using OptiCruise, so it will play a vital role in our decarbonisation strategy,” says Vago.

MSC Cruises will also continue to call at ports offering shore power capabilities, after installing the systems in 16 of its 22 existing ships.

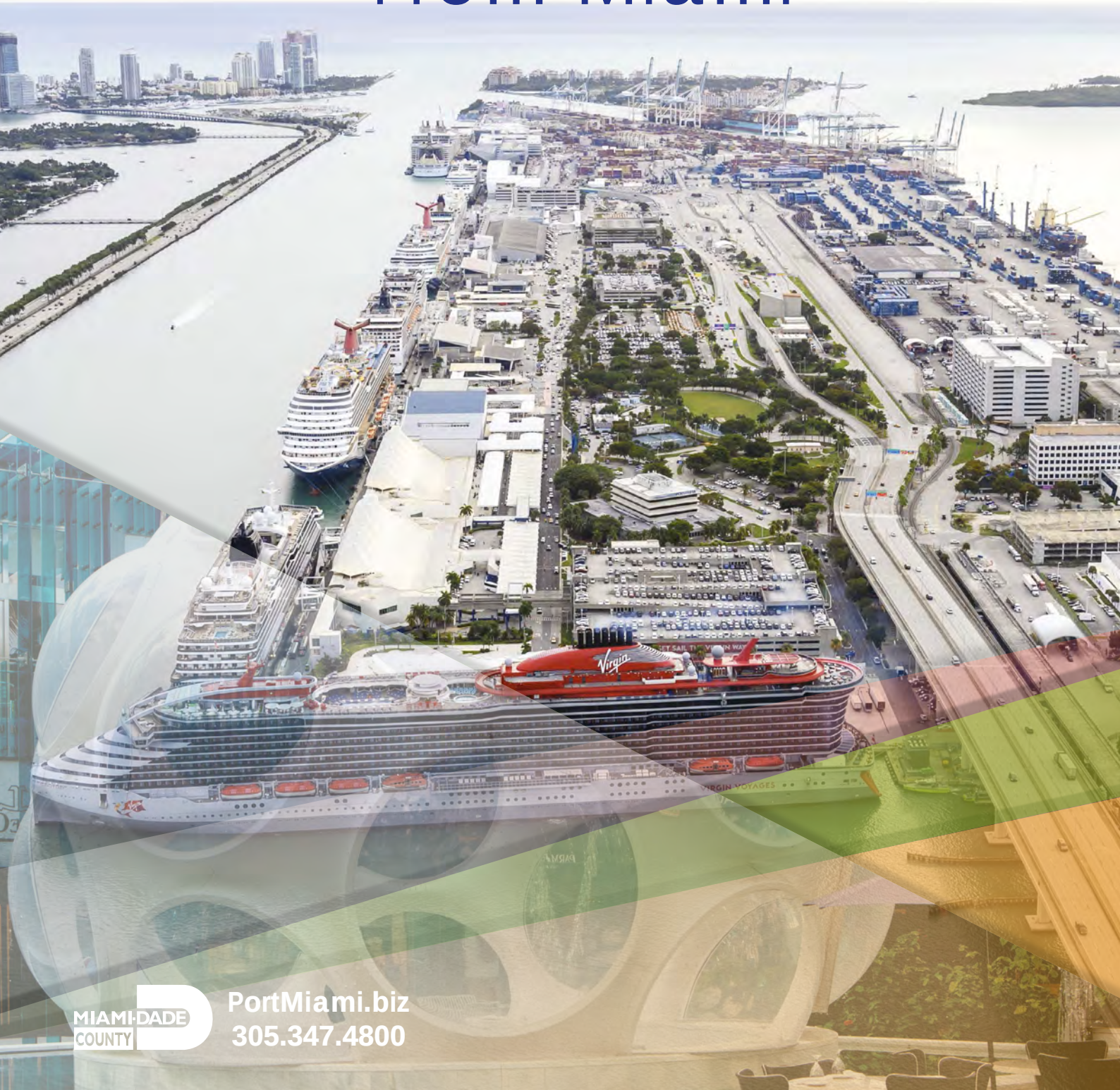
“In 2023, our ships made 44 shore power connections at eight ports in Norway, Germany, the UK and Malta, and we aim to make 220 connections by the end of 2024,” says Vago. “We will be installing shore power on our remaining fleet and any future newbuilds too. The challenge is that only a small percentage of ports in the world currently have the infrastructure to provide shoreside electricity to cruise ships, so there's a lot of work to be done before we will see a meaningful impact on decarbonisation but we are now starting to see progress onshore.”

Determined to lead the way, MSC Cruises will equip its new 11,670-square-metre cruise terminal in Barcelona, Spain, with both shore power and LNG



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MSC Cruises' new terminal at PortMiami will be able to handle 36,000 daily passenger movements

bunkering facilities. The terminal has been designed in collaboration with globally renowned Catalan architect Ricardo Bofill and will be operated by MSC Cruises for 31 years. It is scheduled for completion at the end of 2024 and is expected to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification standards.

“Barcelona is an important homeport for MSC Cruises in the West Mediterranean because it offers flight, road and rail connections to Europe and other international destinations,” says Vago. “The shore power facilities and LNG bunkering service at the terminal will allow us to homeport our newest and most environmentally friendly ships in the city, providing a great economic boost for the local economy.”

MSC Cruises' new terminal in Miami, Florida, will also have shore power capabilities. The facility, which is set to open in 2025 is being built in partnership with PortMiami, Miami-Dade County and Fincantieri Infrastructure for around \$350 million. The four-storey building was designed by architecture firm Arquitectonica and will be able to accommodate up to three

of MSC Cruises' newest and biggest ships at once and handle 36,000 daily passenger movements per day.

“It will be the largest cruise terminal not only in North America but in the world and will become an iconic new landmark that will be visible from both the water and downtown Miami,” says Vago. “We’ll use the latest facial recognition and luggage and security screening technologies to halve boarding times. The new facilities in both Barcelona and Miami, and the many other terminals we own and operate elsewhere in the world, will offer seamless embarkation and disembarkation experiences and the same high level of service guests expect on our ships.”

In April 2025, the Miami terminal will host the christening ceremony of MSC Cruises' new MSC World America, which is the second of four World-class ships to be built by Chantiers de l'Atlantique. The first vessel, MSC World Europa was named in Doha, Qatar, and has since sailed itineraries in the Middle East and West Mediterranean.

The 6,762-guest MSC World America will be powered by LNG and offer luxurious suites and cabins, six speciality restaurants, four main restaurants, two

buffets, a casual fast-food venue, 20 bars and lounges, multiple entertainment venues, a spa, six pools, and many other amenities. These onboard facilities will be spread across seven different districts, including the multi-storey indoor Galleria, high-tech entertainment area MSC Luna Park Arena, the Aqua Deck, the adults-only Zen Area, The Terraces, the open-air World Promenade, the top-deck Family Aventura Park, and the brand's largest-ever MSC Yacht Club, an exclusive ship-within-a-ship complex open to select guests.

“We’re seeing more multigenerational groups, so we wanted to create multiple districts with their own unique facilities and experiences to allow every guest to create their own perfect holiday,” says Vago, noting that he predicts guests will be particularly impressed by The Harbour.

Located on the top deck in the Family Aventura district, The Harbour will have food and beverage outlets, a family dwelling area, a high ropes course and rock-climbing wall, and a playground modelled on the lighthouse at MSC Cruises' private Bahamian island, Ocean Cay MSC Marine Reserve. There will also be an aqua park with a 90-degree vertical drop slide, a raft slide featuring virtual



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Vago expects The Harbour, which features slides, a ropes course, food outlets, a family area and more, to be one of MSC World America's most popular spaces

reality technology, and Cliffhanger, a four-seat swing that will propel riders back and forth over the edge of the ship, 50 metres above the ocean.

“We wanted to create a safe space where family members of all ages can enjoy themselves,” says Vago. “Here, older and younger family members can play together, or try different activities on their own before reuniting over some lunch. I’m particularly excited about Cliffhanger, which is the only over-water swing ride at sea and will offer a uniquely thrilling experience.”

MSC World America’s onboard experiences are tailored to the preferences of US passengers and the ship will initially offer itineraries in North America, but it has been designed for global operation, says Vago. “Just like MSC World Europa and all of our other vessels, MSC World America will be able to deliver exciting itineraries anywhere in the world.”

In 2026, the brand will welcome a third World-class ship, MSC World Asia, which will boast MSC Cruises’ signature design touches, experiences and features inspired by Asia. The cruise ship will be an “evolution” of the existing World-class ships, with “an even further reduced carbon footprint”.



MSC World America will debut in April 2025 and offer onboard experiences tailored to North American passengers

“With every ship we strive to improve the environmental technology and features that enrich the guest experience,” says Vago. “MSC World Asia continues in this tradition and will offer even more advanced marine and onboard hospitality technologies, as well as enhanced guest experiences.”

An as-yet unnamed fourth ship will follow at a later date, and the industry is

speculating whether MSC Cruises may choose to further expand the class. “We typically build ships in series of four but everyone keeps reminding us that there are seven continents, so maybe we’ll consider building some more to make sure we’ve got them all covered!” jokes Vago.

MSC Cruises’ relentless focus on delivering high-quality, sustainable ships and continually developing

“With every ship we strive to improve the environmental technology and features that enrich the guest experience”

Marina Bay Cruise Centre Singapore

Discover the
Region's Treasure from
Your Homeport Singapore

28,000 sqm
terminal space

deep waters
with no height restrictions

6,800 pax
design load

395 m
pier length



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within reach

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Management

 Stay
connected




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CRUISE CENTRE SINGAPORE

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MANAGED BY

 **CREUERS**



Guests sailing on MSC World America will be able to board the Jaw Drop @ The Spiral slide in The Harbour on the top deck and descend 11 decks to the World Promenade

new itineraries and shore excursion programmes has led to impressive success in recent years. “Passenger numbers almost doubled year-on-year in 2023, with the brand’s 22 ships taking more than four million guests on 385 itineraries to 102 countries,” says Vago.

MSC Group has recorded similar success with its luxury brand Explora Journeys, which debuted its first boutique ship in July 2023.

“Creating a luxury cruise line has long been a dream for me and my family,” says Vago. “MSC Cruises offers the premium MSC Yacht Club experience, which is very popular, so it felt like a natural evolution to create a dedicated luxury brand that offers an elevated experience but the same great value for money.”

Explora I is small enough to visit both well-known and off-the-beaten-track destinations, and offers a range of amenities. “We have a fantastic luxury small ship offering spacious suites, pools, outdoor seating areas, bars, authentic fine dining experiences, a spa and spaces to relax, as well as hosts providing personalised services,” says Vago. “In addition, we have flexible itineraries with easily accessible turnaround ports, and

exclusive shore excursions are designed to fully immerse our guests in the culture, nature and history of the destinations they visit. Many of these are influenced by the personal travel experiences of me and my family.”

These onboard and onshore experiences are designed to help guests achieve what Explora Journeys calls an ocean state of mind.

“One of life’s real luxuries is the ability to spend quality time doing something you enjoy – whether that’s by yourself or with your friends and family, or newfound travel companions,” says Vago. “Explora Journeys enables guests to do just that and we now aim to bring this luxury cruising experience to more travellers, focusing first on the European and North American source markets.”

Explora Journeys will expand the fleet, with Explora II debuting in September 2024, followed by the LNG-powered Explora III and Explora IV in 2026 and 2027 respectively, and Explora V and Explora VI in 2027 and 2028. The latter vessels will both have next-generation LNG engines and fuel cells. “MSC Group is committed to making the Explora Journeys fleet environmentally

sustainable, so the ships will feature many of the technologies and solutions that are helping MSC Cruises to increase energy-efficiency and lower emissions,” says Vago.

To ensure the ongoing success of both Explora Journeys and MSC Cruises in 2024 and beyond, Vago says his team will continue to prioritise attention to detail, hard work, professionalism and a dedication to delivering high-quality travel experiences.

“We’re a family-owned company led by a hands-on management team with decades of shipping experience and the ability to turn progressive ideas into reality,” says Vago. “We don’t need to satisfy external shareholders, so we can make quick decisions and invest in whatever we believe will be best for the business and our people in the long term. We’ll continue to push design, engineering and technical boundaries to make meaningful, measurable changes that have a long-term positive impact on our guests, our employees and our planet.” Of course, we will do this all while delivering the best possible onboard and destination experiences for our guests.” **CFR**

Disney to bring its cruise experience to Japan for the first time in 2029

German shipbuilder Meyer Werft is to build a Wish-class cruise ship for Oriental Land Company to operate on behalf of Disney



From left: Kenji Yoshida, representative director, president and chief operations officer of OLC; Yumiko Takano, representative director, chairperson and CEO of OLC; Toshio Kagami, chair of the board of directors at OLC; Thomas Mazloum, president of Disney Signature Experiences; and Sharon Siskie, senior vice president at Disney Cruise Line, celebrate with Captain Mickey and Captain Minnie

Disney Cruise Line has commissioned German shipbuilder Meyer Werft to build a Wish-class cruise ship for Oriental Land Company (OLC), which will operate Disney cruises for the Japanese market.

Construction of the ship is expected to be completed in 2028, with operations beginning in early 2029. The agreement with OLC will bring year-round Disney cruises to Japan for the first time.

"I am very happy to sign this contract today and win OLC as a new customer from Japan," said Bernard Meyer, Meyer Werft managing director. "This order contributes to the long-term development of shipbuilding in Papenburg [in Germany]."

Josh D'Amato, chairman of Disney Experiences, said: "Disney Cruise Line has ambitious plans to bring family vacations and Disney storytelling to more guests around the world than ever before. We are thrilled to continue the success of this expansion as we collaborate with OLC to introduce another distinctly Disney vacation experience to families and fans in Japan."

As a sister ship to Disney Wish, the new vessel is expected to feature many signature Disney venues and experiences, with select modifications specially designed to cater to Japanese guests. It will be powered by LNG, be approximately 140,000gt and is expected to have around 1,250 staterooms. The ship will feature interior designs created by Walt Disney Imagineering.

"I am sincerely proud that Disney and OLC will be able to work together to create a world-class cruise business in Japan," said Yumiko Takano, representative director, chairperson and CEO of OLC, which has operated Japan's Disney Resort since 1983. "OLC will use their know-how from the theme park business to continue pushing boundaries and provide family entertainment cruise experiences filled with inspiration and surprise."

The ship is expected to offer short-haul cruises departing from and arriving at ports around the Tokyo metropolitan area. Further details about itineraries, onboard experiences and the ship's maiden voyage will be announced at a later date. **CFR**

The new vessel will be a sister ship to Disney Wish



Kenji Yoshida, representative director, president and chief operating officer of OLC, and Bernard Meyer, managing director of Meyer Werft, pictured after signing the agreement in July 2024

DID YOU KNOW?



Meyer Werft delivered the first Wish-class ship to Disney Cruise Line in 2022. The shipbuilder is constructing two sister ships, Disney Treasure and Disney Destiny, which are scheduled to be delivered in 2024 and 2025, respectively. It will also construct four additional ships for Disney Cruise Line to be delivered between 2027 and 2031.

Wanzl solutions ensure quick luggage transit

German manufacturer Wanzl's Rollcruiser ensures luggage can be transported quickly from check-in at the port all the way to the cabin. PVC fabric tarpaulins protect the luggage from bad weather, while impact profiles and deflector rollers protect walls and furniture onboard the ship as crew members move the trolley.

Wanzl has worked with cruise lines such as AIDA Cruises to improve its trolleys by developing various braking solutions, stacking options for small spaces and whiteboards. It has created the Mundus housekeeping trolley, which is compact, low weight, has parking brakes and additional safety hooks, offering maximum safety even in rough seas.



Product spotlight
Hera LED-wardrobe tube luminaire Q



Hera's LED clothes rail light, with an integrated motion detector, turns on automatically when the wardrobe is approached or opened. The sensor switches itself off after 30 seconds if no movement is detected, or if the door is closed.

The clothes rail light can be mounted to the side walls of the wardrobe or under the shelf, making it ideal for retrofitting projects. The rail light is available in different standard and bespoke lengths.

Trimline transitions to eco-friendly tape

UK-based outfitter Trimline has taken another step towards its sustainability goals and is now using a fully recyclable (and recycled) tape across the business. On an average outfitting job, Trimline's team can use hundreds of rolls of tape, using it to package material during shipping, to secure protective wrapping on products waiting to be installed and on completed floors and walls.

"On a typical refit we will use somewhere between 10 and 20 miles of tape, for packaging product and materials, and taping the protection across the areas we are working on," said Nick Farrell, co-owner of Trimline. "It's a really visible thing, and we're so pleased to have found a solution which is more sustainable. The fact that it is also cheaper than the previous tape we used is an added bonus!"



TDS

TILLBERG DESIGN of SWEDEN



TILLBERG DESIGN OF SWEDEN IS PART OF VIKEN GROUP

Viewpoint: Aldona Mäkinen

Merging timeless design with modern sustainability

When it comes to the ambiance and functionality of cruise ships, the importance of timeless lighting design cannot be overstated, and yet, lighting cruise ships presents unique challenges.

TVV Marine Lighting prides itself on creating lights that not only enhance the aesthetic of modern cruise ships but also withstand the test of time. Our conscious selection of ecological materials also speaks volumes about our commitment to sustainability.

With a strong emphasis on, and dedication to, blending timeless design and the newest LED technology with ecological materials, our designs not only illuminate modern cruise ship spaces beautifully, but also contribute to a sustainable future.



Aldona Mäkinen is CEO of TVV Marine Lighting



TVV Marine Lighting provided lighting for numerous areas onboard Costa Cruises' flagship Costa Smeralda II



MSC World America to feature family-friendly outdoor attractions

MSC Cruises' upcoming ship World America will feature The Harbour, a new outdoor space on the ship's top deck specifically designed for children and families.

The area will feature a variety of dry and water-based attractions, including The Harbour Aquapark, which will offer a range of water slides including a 90-degree vertical drop slide and a raft slide featuring virtual reality technology. Jaw Drop @ The Spiral, meanwhile, is a dry slide which will descend 11 decks to the World Promenade. A rock climbing wall and high trail ropes course will also be included in the area, along with The Harbour Light House, a playground modelled after the lighthouse at MSC's private island destination, Ocean Cay MSC Marine Reserve in The Bahamas.



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Costa Favolosa becomes largest ship to visit Aberdeen



Costa Cruises' 290-metre-long cruise ship, Costa Favolosa, became the largest vessel to visit Port of Aberdeen in the Scottish port's 888-year history, when it berthed in at the South Harbour in July 2024. The previous record was held by AIDA Cruises' 253-metre-long AIDA Sol, which visited the port earlier in July.

"We are delighted to welcome the Costa Favolosa, its guests and crew to Aberdeen," said Bob Sanguinetti, CEO of Port of Aberdeen. "This is the latest demonstration of how we're driving diversification in energy, trade and tourism with our expanded infrastructure."



Century Cruises' new ship, Century Voyage, will make its debut in September 2025 on the Yangtze River in China. The ship has been designed to offer Western comfort with Chinese hospitality, according to the cruise operator.



New research from Stena Line shows that

20 per cent of British citizens (over 10 million people) have never travelled by ferry.

The ferry operator's research found the perception of ferry travel may be 'outdated', with large numbers of people unaware of the modern facilities onboard, including spas, cinemas and pet cabins.

Copenhagen breaks ground on shore power facilities



Construction has begun on a shore power facility for cruise ships calling at the Oceankaj and Langelinie berths in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Various executives took part in the groundbreaking ceremony in June 2024, including (from left) Sophie Haestorp Andersen, Lord Mayor of Copenhagen; Anne Skovbro, CEO of By & Havn, Copenhagen City and Port Development Agency; and Barbara Scheel Agersnap, CEO of Copenhagen Malmö Port. The facility is expected to be operational in 2025.

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Royal Caribbean chooses IRON Pump for Icon-class ships

IRON Pump has supplied centrifugal pumps for two of Royal Caribbean International's Icon-class ships.

The supplier has provided its water pump package for both Icon of the Seas and Star of the Seas, the cruise line's second Icon-class vessel which is nearing completion. It expects to provide a similar number of pumps to the third Icon-class ship at the end of the year.

The 91 pumps are used in HVAC, bilge, cooling, ballast, fire and thruster systems.

"Continuous innovation and unparalleled luxury experiences are the name of the game, and the world's biggest cruise liner is not only a floating city but also a symbol of engineering marvel," said Helle Auken Lygum, head of marketing and sales at IRON Pump. "It is characterised by the grandeur, luxury and diverse offerings accommodating thousands of passengers and crew members while crossing the vast seas."



American Liberty delivered ahead of schedule



American Cruise Lines' third Coastal Cat ship American Liberty has departed on its inaugural cruise after it was delivered ahead of schedule by Chesapeake Shipbuilding. The ship successfully completed sea trials in July 2024 before departing on the brand's 'New England Islands' itinerary on 15 August, sailing roundtrip from Providence, Rhode Island.

The 100-passenger vessel is the latest in American Cruise Lines' Project Blue series of 12 small ships for river and coastal cruising in the USA. Several ships of the series are also currently under construction, including the fourth Coastal Cat, American Legend, which is set to begin cruising in November 2024.

Carnival Corporation orders three new ships from Fincantieri

Italian shipbuilder Fincantieri is to build three new ships for Carnival Cruise Line. The ships will be a new class of vessel, each of which will be nearly 230,000gt with capacity for almost 8,000 guests in over 3,000 staterooms. They will be LNG-powered and are expected to be delivered in the summers of 2029, 2031 and 2033, respectively.

The new order means Carnival Corporation has ordered five new ships for Carnival Cruise Line in 2024, adding to the two Excel-class ships expected to be delivered by Meyer Werft in 2027 and 2028.



Carnival's Excel-class fleet includes Carnival Jubilee which entered service in December 2023



Riviera Radiance and Riviera Rose to sail on the Danube and the Douro

Riviera Travel's newbuild river cruise ships, Riviera Radiance and Riviera Rose, will offer itineraries on Europe's Danube and Douro rivers when they set sail in March and April 2025, respectively.

The 178-guest Riviera Radiance will operate six different voyages on the Danube. Voyages will include the eight-day 'Blue Danube', the 15-day

'Budapest to the Black Sea' and the six-day 'Danube's imperial cities and yuletide markets' itineraries. Passengers can also embark on the eight-day 'Christmas on the Danube' itinerary on 21 December 2025 to visit Budapest and Bratislava, Wachau Valley, Melk, Salzburg, Linz and Vienna in Austria. Meanwhile, passengers on

the ship's six-day 'New Year on the Danube' sailing will welcome the arrival of 2026 in Vienna.

The 114-guest Riviera Rose will offer 30 departures of its eight-day 'Highlights of the Douro Valley and Salamanca' cruise, which features tours of Porto's old town, Mateus Palace and Castelo Rodrigo in Portugal.

Livorno, Port for Tuscany.



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New ro-pax designed by Incat Crowther enters service

Spanish operator Baleària has debuted Margarita Salas, a dual-fuel ro-pax ferry designed by Incat Crowther, on the daily service between Barcelona, Spain, and Mallorca and Menorca in the Balearic Islands.

Margarita Salas is the second fast ferry to be designed by Incat Crowther and built by Astilleros Armon Gijon for Baleària. It has four 9,600-kilowatt dual-fuel LNG engines from Wärtsilä and has been designed to “maximise sustainability and to deliver excellent onboard comfort and amenities”, according to Incat Crowther.

The ferry is 123 metres long and 28 metres wide, with capacity for 1,200 passengers and 450 vehicles. It also features an additional passenger deck



with a spacious lounge area in the bow and an expanded aft terrace with an outdoor bar service. Passengers will also benefit from several

innovative technologies including broadband internet, on-demand digital entertainment, and QR code access to their cabins.

First steel cut for BC Ferries' electric vessels



Damen Shipyards Group has cut the first steel for the first two of four fully electric Island-class ferries it is building for Canadian operator BC Ferries at its shipyard in Romania.

The ferries will be the first fully electric vessels in BC Ferries' fleet and will operate with battery packs that can supply the power train with 2,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity. Based on Damen's double-ended ro-ro 8113 E3 model, the vessels will be capable of carrying up to 47 vehicles and 390 passengers when they begin operations on routes connecting Nanaimo with Gabriola Island and Campbell River with Quadra Island in 2026.

Spirit of Tasmania V floats out

Rauma Marine Constructions and Tasmania-based ferry operator TT-Line Company have floated out Spirit of Tasmania V at the Rauma shipyard in Finland. The vessel, which was christened by godmother Barbara Baker, the 29th Governor of Tasmania, will enter service on the Bass Strait between Geelong in Victoria, Australia, and Devonport in Tasmania, in spring 2025.





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FLOORING SYSTEMS

Brombach + Gess to showcase glazing solutions at SMM 2024



Brombach + Gess will be displaying its energy-efficient ship glazing solutions at SMM 2024 in Hamburg, Germany on 3-6 September 2024. The company's photovoltaic glass, which can generate energy through a thin and translucent solar film, will be showcased alongside the BalustradeMove flexible railing system. This features a moveable pane that can be moved manually to transform outdoor areas into wind-protected zones.

The company will also exhibit a bonded A60 fire-resistant glazing solution, as well as an expanded portfolio of interior glass products that now includes doors, partitions, staircases, mirrors and decorative panes.



The International Maritime Organization has chosen 'Our Ocean – Our Obligation – Our Opportunity' as the theme for next year's World Maritime Day, which will be celebrated on 25 September 2025.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2024

SMM 2024

3-6 September
Hamburg, Germany
www.smm-hamburg.com

Canadian Ferry Association Conference and Trade Show

8-10 September
Halifax, Nova Scotia
canadianferry.ca/conference/cfa-2024-conference-and-trade-show

IMPA London

10-11 September
London, UK
www.impaevents.com/event/london

Seatrade Cruise Med

11-12 September
Malaga, Spain
www.seatradecruiseevents.com/med

Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association Cruise Conference & Tradeshow

22-25 October
St. Maarten, Caribbean
www.f-cca.com

GreenPort Congress & Cruise

23-25 October
Le Havre, France
www.portstrategy.com/greenport-cruise-and-congress

Adriatic Sea Forum

24-25 October
Ravenna, Italy
www.adriaticseaforum.com/forum

Interferry2024

26-30 October
Marrakesh, Morocco
www.interferry.com/interferry-2024-conference-marrakech-morocco

International Cruise Summit

12-13 November
Madrid, Spain
www.internationalcruisesummit.com

Motorship Propulsion & Future Fuels

19-21 November
Hamburg, Germany
www.motorship.com/propulsion-and-future-fuels-conference

IMPA Singapore

26-27 November
Singapore
www.impaevents.com/event/singapore

Cruise Ship Interiors Design Expo Europe

4-5 December
London, UK
cruiseshipinteriors-europe.com

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SMM 2024: decarbonising the shipping industry

3-6 September 2024 | Hamburg, Germany

Taking place from 3-6 September 2024 in Hamburg, Germany, SMM 2024 will focus on decarbonisation and the digital transformation of the shipping industry.

Discussions at the event will focus on how the maritime industry can move towards carbon neutrality by 2050, digitalise its operations, cope with volatile global supply chains and geopolitical instability.

“The sector can only tackle these difficulties by working together closely,” said Claus Ulrich Selbach of event organiser, Hamburg Messe und Congress. “At SMM we offer shipowners, suppliers and shipyards an optimal platform for their joint efforts to develop feasible technology solutions that address the pressing challenges of our time. The enormous interest from exhibitors and visitors alike tells us that there is a tremendous need for communication.”

Organisers are expecting more visitors and exhibitors in 2024 than at the previous event, partly because the Asian market has fully resumed operations after the pandemic. For example, China and Korea, two big shipbuilding nations, will have a stronger presence at SMM 2024.

“We are expecting more than 2,000 international exhibitors from 70 nations to be here [which] means we are almost fully booked,” said Selbach. “We are overwhelmed by the response [and] are setting up an additional hall to accommodate all requests. Ticket sales are likewise very strong, and we are anticipating an attendance of over 40,000.”

The 31st SMM will have a dedicated AI Center in Hall B6, which will show start-up companies how artificial intelligence technologies are being used in maritime projects.

“AI fundamentally changes our economy and our business processes

across all industries, [and] it harbours many opportunities for the shipping sector, as well,” said Petra Vorsteher, co-founder and CEO of AI.Hamburg and initiator of the AI Center.

SMM 2024 will also focus on recruiting young talent to the industry. For the first time, the Maritime Career Market and the Career Forum will take place on two days in Hall B2. “This is where young jobseekers can meet potential employers; they will receive information about jobs on shore and at sea as well as training programmes, career opportunities and job openings in the maritime sector,” said Christoph Lücke, SMM director.

Attendees will also have the opportunity to attend conferences and networking events.

*Register for the event at:
www.smm-hamburg.com*



Photo: Hamburg Messe und Congress/Michael Zapf



Photo: Hamburg Messe und Congress/Michael Zapf



Photo: Stephan Wallocha



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Cruise Ship Interiors Design Expo Europe

4-5 December 2024 | London, UK

Cruise Ship Interiors Design Expo Europe (CSI Europe) will connect representatives from across the cruise ship interiors supply chain with cruise lines, designers and shipyards on 4-5 December 2024 at ExCeL London, UK.

Attendees can learn about the innovation and creativity in the industry from over 200 exhibiting studios, outfitters and interior suppliers including firms that have been operating for over 50 years. Buyers interested in creating heritage-inspired designs can connect with experts from one of Italy's oldest

porcelain tile manufacturers Marca Corona, as well as representatives from John Lewis, Fincantieri's turnkey team Marine Interiors and other suppliers including Groupe GM, Laticrete, MKN, Sifas and Welbilt.

The conference schedule will include sessions led by Europe's ocean, river and expedition cruise lines as well as industry experts who will discuss key cruise ship interior design topics. It will also include speed networking, 'Lunch & Learns' sessions, Q&As and Pitch & Pint.

Plus, CSI Europe will debut its new zone, Hospitality@CSI, where 20

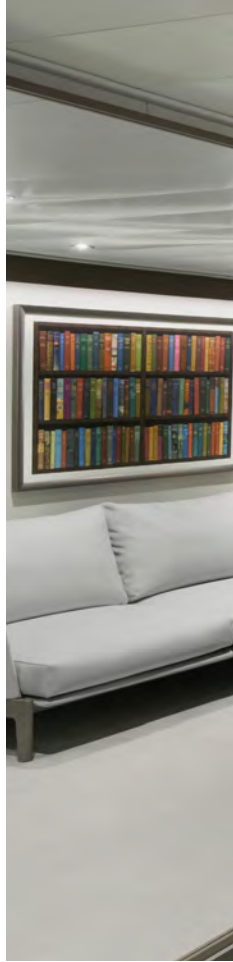
exhibitors will showcase their interior design projects and products that have helped to shape the guest hospitality experience, improve efficiencies and enhance brand identity for cruise lines. It will also launch its Cruise Xperience Innovation Summit to showcase suppliers who build seamless services, amenities and experiences, and celebrate the best cruise ship interior designs with its Cruise Ship Interiors Awards that have various award categories.

Register for the event at:
cruiseshipinteriors-europe.com



Exploring the world in effortless luxury

Achille Staiano and Koray Savas of Explora Journeys explain to Rebecca Gibson how boutique ships, personalised services, flexible itineraries and exclusive excursions are helping the brand to redefine the luxury cruise experience



The Aponte family, which owns MSC Group, achieved a long-held ambition in July 2023, debuting Explora I, the first boutique ship for its new luxury cruise brand, Explora Journeys.

“Our executive chairman, Pierfrancesco Vago, started with a blank piece of paper and a vision of redefining the luxury ocean travel experience,” says Achille Staiano, chief commercial officer of Explora Journeys. “For the family, the true meaning of luxury is experiencing new things and making the very best of the most precious gift any of us has: time. We wanted to bring vibrant and cosmopolitan yet relaxed European luxury to the world’s oceans.”

One of the brand’s main goals was to build small ships capable of calling at destinations that cannot be accessed by larger vessels. “However, luxury is not about being small, it’s about being authentic,” says Staiano. “We also wanted ships that were large enough to offer a wide choice of amenities and unrivalled space, but remain intimate, private and exclusive. And we decided early on that our guest profile would not be that of a typical luxury cruise passenger.”

Spanning 14 decks, Explora I has more than 2,500 square metres of outdoor public spaces, including three pools, a promenade deck with whirlpools, and poolside dining venues and bars. Other highlights include a 1,000-square-metre wellness and fitness complex, six restaurants, indoor bars and lounges, a pool with a retractable roof, an art gallery, a casino, a boutique retail space, and 461 expansive ocean-front suites, penthouses and residences, all with floor-to-ceiling windows and private sun terraces. The ship also has one of the highest guest-to-space ratios in the luxury category.

“Our ship was built in partnership with some of the world’s foremost superyacht and hospitality designers, and has an abundance of fantastic restaurants, holistic spa and fitness areas, and great spaces for vibrant entertainment,” says Staiano. “It is much more like a floating boutique hotel than a traditional cruise ship. Guests can immerse themselves in cosmopolitan European luxury with generous value, while enjoying the finest comfort and privacy at sea and waking up to a new view every day.”

Since its maiden journey from Danish capital Copenhagen, Explora I has carried thousands of travellers to both renowned and lesser-known destinations. It will be joined by a sister, Explora II, in September 2024.

“We’ve recorded incredibly high levels of satisfaction from guests who have sailed with us so far,” says Staiano. “Explora II will also offer exceptional service, gourmet dining and outstanding destination options, creating a luxurious and memorable ocean travel experience unlike any other.”

Paying attention to every little detail is a key element of Explora Journeys’ luxury promise, particularly onboard the vessels.

“We want our guests to be pampered and experience the very best service they could ever imagine, while always feeling like they are in the comfort of their own home,” says Koray Savas, vice president of hotel operations at Explora Journeys. “Our brand is built around the concept of achieving the ‘ocean state of mind’, so we give people time to connect with the ocean, themselves, their travel companions, fellow guests, and the places and communities



Photos: Explora Journeys



Explora I offers multiple luxury amenities, such as a pool with comfortable lounge seats and a retractable roof so it can be used in all weathers. Meanwhile, the spacious suites (above) onboard Explora Journeys' ships are designed to provide guests with all the comforts they are used to at home



Onboard hosts deliver personalised services and experiences in dining venues like Marble & Co, Explora I's European-style steakhouse

they visit. It really is purposeful and transformational travel.”

Explora Journeys’ onshore teams and onboard hosts are integral to delivering the exceptional luxury guest experience, says Savas. “Their dedication and expertise ensure that every aspect of our guests’ journeys is seamless, personalised and memorable, from the moment they begin planning their voyage to long after they disembark.”

Onshore teams play a crucial role in pre-journey planning, providing personalised concierge services, assisting guests with travel arrangements, pre-cruise accommodation, itinerary planning and more. Meanwhile, onboard hosts provide a warm welcome from the moment guests step on the ship, says Savas.

“Our hosts are trained to anticipate and respond to the individual needs of every guest, whether it’s arranging a private dinner, organising a special celebration, or providing tailored activity recommendations,” he explains. “The food and beverage teams deliver an extraordinary culinary experience characterised by exceptional quality and personalised service, while our spa and

wellness teams offer bespoke programmes to help travellers relax and rejuvenate. We also offer expert-led lectures, workshops and cultural performances to enhance understanding and enjoyment of the destinations visited.”

Post-cruise, the onshore teams gather feedback and assist with future travel planning. “This ongoing relationship helps us continually refine our services and maintain a strong connection with our customers,” explains Savas.

Such feedback also helps Explora Journeys to enhance its itineraries, some of which were designed with the help of Vago.

“It’s very important to listen to guests and we did this particularly with the itinerary planning for Explora I,” says Staiano. “Time is precious, so we wanted to make our journeys more accessible. Now, we have shorter journeys starting from seven nights that can be combined into 14- and 21-night sailings without repeating ports. They all use easily accessible turnaround ports.”

Designed to offer “ultimate flexibility”, the itineraries include longer port stays with “unconventional” arrival and departure times, allowing people to

make the most of destinations. “We want to open up luxury cruising to a new demographic of guests who may never have considered a holiday at sea, including multigenerational families,” says Staiano.

Explora Journeys considers several factors when choosing ports for its itineraries, including their cultural and



“Our hosts are trained to anticipate and respond to the individual needs of every guest”

Koray Savas

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scenic appeal and the availability of exclusive experiences.

“Explora Journeys’ guests have a particular affinity for destinations that offer meaningful travel experiences,” says Savas. “Smaller ports and off-the-beaten-path locations, which are often inaccessible to larger cruise ships, are especially popular. While we do not have traditional homeports, we focus on strategic locations and turnaround ports with easy road, rail and air access to our ships.”

Both the Mediterranean and the Caribbean are among the most sought-after regions for Explora Journeys’ guests. Explora II, for example, will embark on an inaugural voyage to Tarragona in Spain, Sorrento in Italy, the Sicilian ports of Lipari, Trapani and Syracuse, and Valletta in Malta after its christening. It will then remain in the West Mediterranean until the end of the European summer season, visiting countries such as Italy, Malta, Spain, Portugal, and Tunisia and Morocco in North Africa. The ship then will sail in the Caribbean and North, Central and South America.

“The Mediterranean, with its rich tapestry of history, culture, and stunning landscapes, offers a variety of charming small ports such as Portofino in Italy, Kotor in Montenegro, and Santorini in Greece,” says Savas. “The Caribbean attracts guests with its vibrant culture, pristine beaches and crystal-clear waters. Destinations like St. Barts, Antigua and the British Virgin Islands offer intimate and exclusive experiences that larger ships simply cannot provide.”

Explora Journeys has “carefully crafted” onshore experiences that will fully immerse guests in the nature, culture, history and gastronomy of the destinations they visit. Tailored to intimate groups of between two and 25 people, some of the experiences include truffle hunting in Rovinj, Croatia; visiting a family-owned vineyard in Mykonos, Greece; exploring the centuries-old monasteries perched atop the Meteora cliffs in Volos, Greece; and taking a guided bicycle tour with a private picnic in Livorno, Italy. Meanwhile, in



Photo: Explora Journeys

Explora Journeys takes guests to renowned destinations like Istanbul in Turkey (pictured) and lesser-known ports of call

the Caribbean, guests can dive at Jacques Cousteau Reserve in Guadeloupe, board a U-boat in Curaçao, embark on an eco-adventure in the St. Kitts rainforest, or take a cooking class in Barbados.

“Our guests are seeking travel that goes beyond mere sightseeing; they desire transformative and authentic experiences that allow them to connect deeply with the places they visit,” says Savas. “We combine luxurious comfort with the thrill of discovery, making each journey not just a holiday, but a truly transformative adventure.”

Over the next four years, the brand will expand its fleet to accommodate more guests and further expand its choice of itineraries. The LNG-powered Explora III

and Explora IV will debut in 2026 and 2027 respectively, while Explora V and Explora VI will set sail in 2027 and 2028. The latter vessels will have LNG engines and hydrogen-powered fuel cells.

“We are committed to a long-term vision and the size of our fleet demonstrates that we’re here for the long run,” says Staiano. “Our fleet development plan covers the next four years, and we aim to fine-tune and enhance each newbuild with further improvements.

“We’re still a relative newcomer to luxury ocean travel and there is so much more that we can, and will, do in the future with the aim of being the best, not the biggest. It’s quality rather than quantity that counts.” **CFR**



“We want to open luxury cruising up to a new demographic of guests”

Achille Staiano

Luxury by design

Regent Seven Seas Cruises' Andrea DeMarco tells Rebecca Barnes about the brand's new partnerships and plans to expand its high-end fleet



“Seven Seas Prestige, debuting in 2026, will be part of our first new ship class in 10 years”

Today it's no longer enough to offer the cruising experience alone.

Cruise lines must now secure relationships with brands that align with their service levels to elevate both their onboard and onshore product offering and keep both new and loyal passengers engaged. This has been one of the key priorities for Andrea DeMarco, president of leading ultra-luxury cruise line Regent Seven Seas Cruises, and her team since she was appointed to the role in 2022.

“I'm immensely proud of our achievements over the past 18 months,” says DeMarco. “Leading our outstanding team during such a transformative time has been both rewarding and exhilarating for me.”

One of the most significant milestones was the introduction of Seven Seas Grandeur in November 2023. The brand has seen a flurry of bookings for its sixth vessel. “The high demand for voyages on our newest ship underscores our guests' desire to explore the world with the unparalleled comfort and elegance that Regent offers,” says DeMarco.

Sister ship to Seven Seas Splendor, the 744-capacity Seven Seas Grandeur enhances the unrivalled experience that guests have come to expect from Regent, says DeMarco. Once onboard, they can relax in an abundance of space, all-inclusive luxury and 15 all-suite accommodation categories, from the opulent Regent Suite to the timeless



Seven Seas Grandeur features impressive sculptures and artwork, including the only Fabergé Egg at sea (right)

Distinctive Suites, and beautifully appointed Spacious Suites.

The vessel has exquisite finishings and meticulous attention to detail throughout, including a multimillion-dollar art collection and an ocean-exclusive Fabergé Egg residing in the atrium. The interiors were created in collaboration with designer firm Studio DADO, which has elevated the aesthetics of ultra-luxury cruising and notably enhanced the brand's culinary offering.

"We have elevated our 'Epicurean Perfection' across eight dining experiences, including its five complimentary speciality restaurants that boast 130 new dishes, which were exclusive to our newest ship at time of launch," says DeMarco. "Guests

can anticipate the highest quality cuisine onboard, whether savouring classic French dishes at Chartreuse or enjoying the convenience of in-suite dining, all meticulously prepared and served by our team of top chefs, sommeliers and hospitality professionals."

Recognising that discerning travellers with healthy budgets are more than willing to pay for exclusive, elevated experiences and packages, Regent has also forged strategic land-based partnerships to provide guests with greater added value.

A highlight for DeMarco is a new partnership with the Aston Martin Aramco Formula One Team – Regent is the team's first official Global Cruise Line Partner. "Aston Martin

Aramco was specifically chosen due to the brand aligning perfectly with Regent's reputation for delivering unrivalled experiences," she says. "This collaboration aims to provide our guests with once-in-a-lifetime experiences, giving them further opportunities for discovery and enrichment during our sailings, such as our new 'Spotlight Voyage' with former Formula One driver, Pedro De La Rosa."

DeMarco confirms that the guest experience is a top priority, and that Regent is always working to offer new and unique ways to explore the world. The recently launched 'Immersive Overnights' collection, which features overnight stays in every port of call,



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shows luxury travellers a different side of some of the world's most popular destinations, with specially curated shore excursions.

To travel there, guests can now select and book all-inclusive fare options which give them more freedom and flexibility to personalise their journey to their tastes. "Just as we recognise the importance of offering guests the most inclusive luxury experience on the ship, we also wish to provide more ways to tailor their itinerary to their unique preferences throughout the entire journey," says DeMarco.

"Flexibility is the ultimate luxury, and with the introduction of these new fare options, guests can choose an all-inclusive cruise fare with incredible inclusions throughout their cruise, ranging from unlimited shore excursions to speciality dining and premium beverages, valet laundry service,

gratuities and more. Alternatively, they can opt for the ultimate all-inclusive fare, which also includes roundtrip flights and a new private executive chauffeur service with Blacklane."

"These new ships represent our commitment to delivering exceptional cruise vacations"

Regent also formed a prestigious partnership with the Global Hotel Alliance (GHA) in 2023, and recently announced new three-night land programmes and accommodation at select iconic GHA

properties during 12 voyages in 2025. Regent and GHA have crafted these multi-day land programmes for those keen to extend their stay in some of the Mediterranean's most iconic destinations.

Available onboard five of the six ships in the existing fleet, the Concierge Collection sailings will provide access to six GHA properties, including Hotel Café Royal in London, UK; Conservatorium in Amsterdam, Netherlands; Anantara Palazzo Naiadi Rome Hotel and the San Clemente Palace Kempinski Venice in Italy; Çırağan Palace Kempinski Istanbul in Turkey; and Divani Apollon Palace & Thalasso in Athens, Greece.

Special shoreside experiences have been crafted to make each land programme an unforgettable experience. These exclusive evening shore excursions enable guests to explore Rome in a vintage Fiat 500 or on a Vespa, take a private tour of



Regent has elevated the dining experience in venues such as Pacific Rim onboard Seven Seas Grandeur

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Regent uses high-end fixtures, fittings and furnishings to create luxurious and spacious suites onboard its fleet of cruise ships

Westminster Abbey in London, sail on the Markermeer Lake in Amsterdam, and more.

With shipbuilder Fincantieri securing a landmark agreement earlier this year to build two further Regent ships in

2026 and 2029, the cruise line is adding to its sophisticated fleet to retain its crown as ‘the World’s Most Luxurious Cruise Line’ in the face of increasing competition, both in the industry and the burgeoning six-star sector.

“Exemplifying Regent’s commitment to revolutionising ultra luxury travel, we’ve been delighted to unveil the name of our incredible new ship, Seven Seas Prestige,” says DeMarco. “Following the tremendously successful Explorer-class vessels we launched in 2016, 2020 and 2023, Seven Seas Prestige, debuting in 2026, will be part of our first new ship class in 10 years. It will once again set a new standard for luxury cruising.”

Exuding ambience and sophistication, the new Prestige-class ships have been designed to maintain the intimate experience that Regent guests love. Regent will also continue to provide even more space for guests throughout the ships.

“Through offering more unrivalled space at sea than ever before, we have been able to introduce new accommodation categories and dining experiences,” says DeMarco. “These new ships represent our commitment to delivering exceptional cruise vacations, allowing us to continue to set the standard for ultra luxury cruising in the fast-growing luxury landscape.” **CFR**

The key to paradise

Carnival Cruise Line's Christine Duffy speaks with Alex Smith about the cruise line's recent expansion and its ambitious plans for the future

For Carnival Cruise Line, the last 18 months have been as busy as any time in its history. Five new ships have joined the fleet as the cruise line has moved into a new period of growth, with further expansion on the cards for the coming years. Among the newcomers is the third ship in Carnival's Excel-class, Carnival Jubilee, which has been sailing to the Caribbean from Galveston, Texas, since its debut in December 2023.

According to Christine Duffy, president of Carnival Cruise Line, the new ship has proven to be a popular addition for guests.

"Carnival Jubilee's offerings have been very well-received in its inaugural season, offering thrilling and innovative features like Bolt: The Ultimate Sea Coaster and more than 20 unique dining options," says

Duffy. "It's a very special ship – the first cruise ship to bring 5G capability onboard in North America, the first ship in Galveston to utilise LNG, and the first-ever new ship to be named in Galveston and homeport there. I know guests from Galveston also love seeing the Texas Star on its bow."

Another of the new additions is Carnival Firenze, which has been sailing from Long Beach, California, since its christening at the port in April 2024. Originally built in 2020 for sister brand Costa Cruises, the ship was transferred to Carnival Cruise Line in February 2024 before undergoing a dry dock in Cadiz, Spain, to introduce the 'Carnival Fun, Italian Style' features to the vessel.

"Inspired by Florence in Italy, Carnival Firenze has been a hit among guests sailing out of Long Beach,



with its immersive design and vibrant atmosphere," says Duffy. "And, of course, the delicious food at our new speciality restaurant Il Viaggio, the special bars Frizzante and Amari, the fun 'Italian street party' and many other Italian influences infused into the ship's programming make it a unique cruise vacation for all who sail on it."

Despite the rapid growth of the last 18 months, Carnival Cruise Line is showing no signs of slowing down its expansion plans. The cruise line has ordered three new, 230,000gt vessels in a new class of ships, following orders for two more Excel-class ships from Meyer Werft earlier in 2024.

"We aren't stopping there either!" says Duffy. "Even before the new Excel-class ships arrive, our fleet



Photo: Carnival Cruise Line

(From left) Josh Weinstein, CEO of Carnival Corporation, singer-songwriter Gwen Stefani and Christine Duffy, president of Carnival Cruise Line, at Carnival Jubilee's christening



Carnival Cruise Line's private destination, Celebration Key, will open in summer 2025

will expand further with two more additions next year. Recently, we announced that P&O Cruises Australia will become part of Carnival Cruise Line. This means we will add Encounter and Adventure to the Carnival Cruise Line fleet in March 2025 – further strengthening our position as a global leader in cruising.”

With the influx of new vessels joining the fleet, Carnival Cruise Line is also working to ensure that its existing vessels continue to offer an up-to-date experience for its guests, says Duffy.

“We continuously enhance our ships during dry dock periods, adding new features and venues, modernising public spaces and staterooms and integrating advanced technologies,” she says. “For

instance, Carnival Glory recently underwent a dry dock where our popular Heroes Tribute Bar & Lounge was added to the ship and the children’s area, Camp Ocean, was refreshed. Earlier this year, Carnival Vista underwent a similar dry dock, also welcoming a Heroes Tribute Bar, a new Effy jewellery store, a new arcade, a refreshed casino and other enhancements.”

Carnival Cruise Line is also planning to grow its offering onshore as well as at sea. Celebration Key, the cruise line’s private destination on the island of Grand Bahama, is currently under construction ahead of its official opening in summer 2025. The destination will offer five distinct areas, including the Welcome Portal, the Family-Friendly Portal, the Adult-

Friendly Portal, the Private Club Portal and the Retail Portal. Plans are also already in place for a further expansion of the destination in 2026, with two extra berths to be added in a \$100 million pier extension project.

“Celebration Key will be the first destination built specifically for Carnival Cruise Line guests,” says Duffy. “It’s going to be a tremendous value add for our guests, as a significant portion of our fleet will be making regular visits there. We’re developing this new destination as a perfect place for the whole family to find their kind of fun – their key to paradise, if you will. It is designed to honour the natural beauty and culture of Grand Bahama and deliver endless opportunities for relaxation and recreation.” **CFR**

A transformative take on traditional cruising

Nirmal Saverimuttu of Virgin Voyages tells Rebecca Gibson how the cruise brand's latest investments are helping it to fulfil its aim of creating an 'epic sea change' in the industry

When Virgin Group established Virgin Voyages in 2014, it aimed to eschew tradition and create an adults-only brand that would revolutionise the cruise industry with superyacht-style ships, varied itineraries and innovative guest experiences.

"We sought to create a ship that Richard and his friends would love to sail on – a boutique hotel with superyacht vibes," explains Nirmal Saverimuttu, who held several roles at Virgin Voyages before becoming CEO in September 2023. "But we also wanted to create a cruise experience with a unique Virgin take that people would want to try."

To achieve this goal, Virgin Voyages began by focusing on its customers (which it calls sailors).

"As a consumer-led brand, we wanted to put our sailors in the driver's seat to help us define what the experience would look like," explains Saverimuttu. "We wanted to do this while also creating a place that our crew would love to work so they would take care of our customers. Our focus was, and remains, on delivering an incredible experience with impeccable service, high-end design and unparalleled value."

A decade later, and Virgin Voyages is successfully fulfilling – and exceeding – its initial goals. The brand debuted its first ship in 2021 and now has two additional vessels, itineraries in four regions of the world, a dedicated cruise terminal at PortMiami and a private beach club in The Bahamas.

"I'm so thrilled to see the results," says Saverimuttu. "We're seeing both high returns and high demand, and the awards we continue to win are voted on by real people. However, I never want us to rest on our laurels; innovation is happening fleet-wide."

In September 2025, Virgin Voyages will launch its fourth ship, Brilliant Lady, which will offer several new onboard experiences.

"While I can't say too much about Brilliant Lady's new dining and entertainment yet, we always try to think of exciting experiences for our sailors," says Saverimuttu. "Each of our 'Lady Ships' has its own personality and unique design, and Brilliant Lady is no different. The ship's design celebrates our love for



Photo: Virgin Voyages



"Our focus was, and remains, on delivering an incredible experience with impeccable service"

the sea. We really leaned into the idea of the words ‘bold’ and ‘radiant’ and what it means to explore destinations that embody both.”

Brilliant Lady’s slightly modified exterior design will enable Virgin Voyages to visit new ports and regions. “We brought the lifeboats inwards and added two hammocks to our Deck 8 Sea Terraces so Brilliant Lady can fit through the Panama Canal and sailors can take in the sights,” explains Saverimuttu. “This crossing will be the highlight of an incredible, 16-night repositioning voyage with stops in Costa Rica and Guatemala.”

In addition, Brilliant Lady will debut new US destinations, including New York, Boston, Portland, Miami, San Diego, Los Angeles, Seattle and Alaska. “They’ve been some of our fastest-selling itineraries ever,” says Saverimuttu. “We’re also looking forward to unveiling a series of new, epic itineraries.”

Ships in the current fleet will be visiting new destinations too. Resilient Lady, for example, will call at several new Caribbean ports and the brand has planned “never-before-seen itineraries” for 2026, says Saverimuttu. “We’ll be sailing to over 100 ports, including bucket-list destinations like Morocco and Iceland.”

To further accelerate its international growth, Virgin Voyages has secured a \$550 million capital raise. “We often get 50 per cent of sailors coming back and sailing with us, so we’re focused on keeping things fresh and exciting,” says Saverimuttu. “Global investments are being made to expand the fleet into new regions and build the brand presence across the world, especially in Europe. We’re also looking at possible restaurant innovations and considering a few other surprises for our guests.”

The brand has already updated its culinary offering, with new selections and an Asian Night Market concept in The Galley, and a third tasting menu in the Test Kitchen. “There may also be a new pop-up concept coming soon that I hope our sailors will love,” says Saverimuttu.



Virgin Voyages is expanding its onboard dining and entertainment offering to ensure sailors can fully relax while onboard the ship

He adds that Virgin Voyages is also “turning up the volume on entertainment” by bringing new acts to its Festival Stage line-up, debuting a Comedy Fest on Resilient Lady, hosting celebrities on ‘Celebrations Voyages’, and more.

“Looking ahead, I see us continuing to be an experience-focused brand, leading this space in our industry and bringing

incredible value,” says Saverimuttu.

“In a world that can sometimes feel intense, we provide a place where people can truly get away from the noise and re-energise. Whether it’s relaxing in a hammock or enjoying our incredible Scarlet Night party, our sailors can do it at their speed in a place they know offers incredible moments.” **CFR**

Powered up

Rebecca Barnes asks Azamara Cruises' new CEO Dondra Ritzenthaler about her vision for the destination-focused brand

Dondra Ritzenthaler isn't one for letting an opportunity pass her by and, when Azamara Cruises' CEO took to the stage as a keynote speaker at the 2024 Cruise Lines International Association Conference in Southampton, UK, her energy and positivity certainly hit all the right notes. She had only been in the role for seven days at the time and her dynamic 'lion's mentality' talk, which focused around telling delegates that a powerful attitude changes everything, was the perfect first day sign-off for the event.

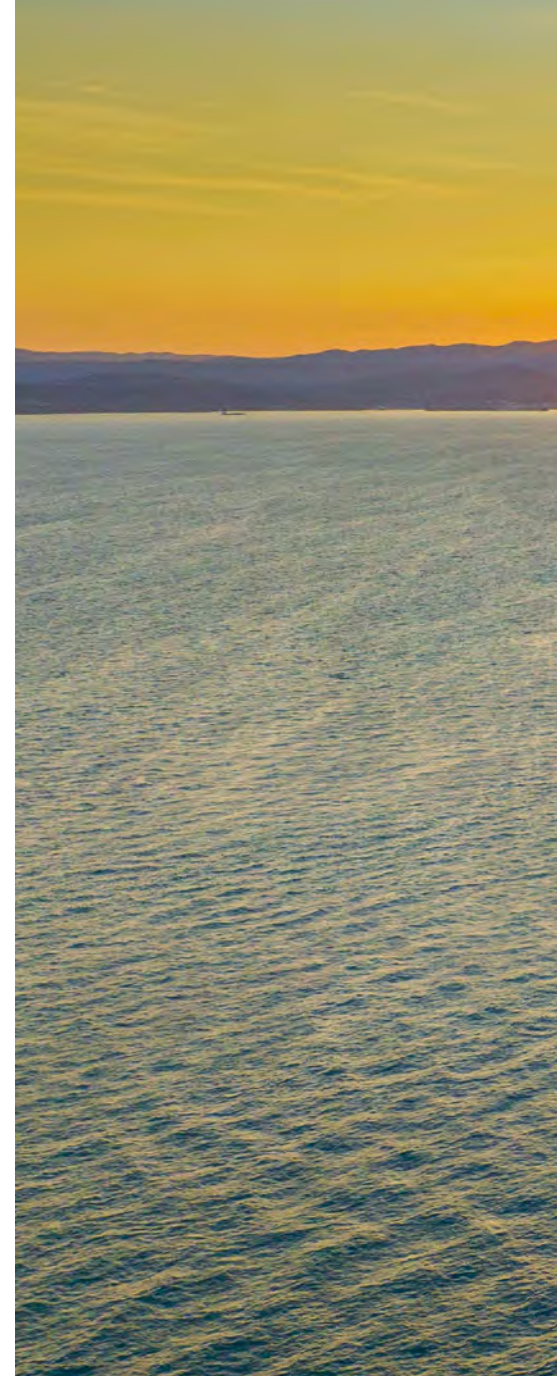
"I need you to be resilient – we have come through crazy times," she said, motivating the audience to leverage partnerships and understand the value of teamwork. She then revealed her vision for Azamara, which includes being even more committed to agents and growing the fleet.

Strategic new hires is key to Azamara's growth, says Ritzenthaler, who has recruited new executive team members to lead the brand in its next phase, which includes growing the UK trade.

"Globally, 85 per cent of Azamara's product is sold through travel agents and in the UK it is 90 per cent," she explains. "I have been working closely with David [Duff, Azamara's UK managing director] to continue to build relationships with the trade, and we have introduced some new initiatives to support UK trade partners. They include a new UK call centre, a trade loyalty programme, a series of Seminars at Sea, and the largest-ever ship visit programme in the UK."

Ritzenthaler is keen to continue the momentum that Azamara has already built as an independent cruise line, so

"The variety of immersive programmes we offer is why guests keep sailing with us"



she has engaged with the line's loyal guests to garner their thoughts on what a destination-focused cruise holiday looks like.

"After speaking with our guests, one of our key priorities is to continue to give them more time to spend in port, so they can experience the incredible destinations we sail to," she says. "We know that the variety of immersive programmes we offer is why guests keep sailing with us, so it's important we listen to them and continue to offer and expand on these experiences."

"Extended Destination Days give guests that all important time to explore and



All four of the brand's ships – Azamara Onward, Azamara Quest, Azamara Journey and Azamara Pursuit pictured together in Koper, Slovenia – sail itineraries focused on immersing guests in destinations

experience these unique shore excursions without ever feeling rushed. We dig deeper with specialised experiences that connect guests to the people, traditions, natural wonders and cultural riches of our destinations. These excursions are limited to just 26 guests, so they enjoy the time and space to ask questions, exchange ideas and really connect.”

Azamara also partners with tour operators like Micato Safaris in South Africa to offer pre- and post-cruise land programmes. “We are working to introduce even more immersive experiences, because we are truly committed to Destination Immersion,

and we want our guests to get to the heart of each destination we visit,” explains Ritzenthaler.

In 2025 and 2026, Azamara will visit eight new ports of call, including Tobago’s capital Scarborough and Pointe des Galets on Réunion island. Along with a 12-night ‘South African Intensive Voyage’ in early 2025, there is a new 79-night ‘Grand Voyage’ in 2026 which will sail to 47 ports in 24 countries, totalling seven overnight stays, including in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and San Antonio, Chile.

With rumours about newbuild ships floating about in the industry, it will be interesting to see how the new Azamara

era evolves under Ritzenthaler’s lead. For now, however, she is keeping her cards relatively close to her chest.

“I love our four ships – they are absolutely beautiful, and we have put a lot of work into maintaining them and ensuring they stay beautiful,” she says. “Of course, I’m excited about the prospect of expanding our fleet, and we are working hard to grow the company so we can bring more guests to even more unique destinations. Currently, our focus is on making Azamara wildly successful with the fleet we do have, and continuing to offer immersive experiences around the world.” **CFR**

From vision to reality

It's been a long journey for Mikael Petterson who shares with Laura Hyde the numerous challenges faced when refurbishing a 30-year-old ship to launch a residential cruise line

Bringing an innovative idea to fruition is never easy, particularly when it comes to launching a new residential cruise brand with a well-appointed ship that will be home to hundreds of guests and sail multi-year voyages to destinations around the world. Such a project comes with unique challenges, all of which require meticulous planning, determination and persistence to overcome if the brand wants to ensure success.

In March 2024, Mikael Petterson embarked on this challenging journey when he took delivery of former Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines ship Braemar, as part of his mission to launch his own residential cruise line, Villa Vie Residences. Petterson planned an eight-week, \$12 million renovation onboard the ship, which had been laid up in Edinburgh, Scotland, since



The pool deck during the ship's refurbishment by Harland & Wolff



“The ship has been customised to include all the comforts and amenities of home”

the Covid-19 pandemic shut the cruise industry down in March 2020. However, the renovation did not go as smoothly as Petterson hoped.

Before the newly renamed Villa Vie Odyssey could sail to the Harland & Wolff shipyard in Belfast, Northern Ireland, for renovation, it had to undergo an unexpected dry dock in Edinburgh. This was to allow technical teams from Villa Vie and Harland & Wolff to ‘wake up’ the ship’s engines and technical systems slowly to prevent long-lasting, irreparable damage.

When the ship set sail for Belfast on 24 April using its own power, Villa Vie shifted the planned departure of its inaugural three-and-a-half-year world

cruise from 15 May in Southampton, UK, to 30 May in Belfast. In the weeks following, numerous issues forced the brand to delay the departure date more than once; first to 15 June after an issue with the ship’s water tanks, then to 25 June after an issue with the rudder stocks. However, ongoing issues with the rudder stocks delayed the launch further.

“The rudder stocks have pushed us back; we have other items onboard that we’re working on from a technical standpoint but it’s not part of the critical path,” said Petterson in an update posted on the cruise line’s YouTube channel on 4 July. “The critical path to get us out of here is the rudder stocks...we’re



The business centre (left) has been created from scratch to enable non-retired residents to work remotely while onboard, while the pool deck (top) required a complete rebuild in order to achieve Petterson's vision

water to join the pools, making the area bigger than it was."

Another big project was to create a business centre to give residents somewhere to work while onboard. The business centre features Starlink and Viasat 3 internet, allowing residents to stay in contact with friends and family at home and enable non-retired residents to work remotely from wherever this ship is in the world.

During its voyage Villa Vie Odyssey will call at 425 destinations in 147 countries. This will include a 95-day journey through the Japan and Philippine Sea beginning in August 2025, visiting Tokyo, Sapporo, Kobe and Hiroshima in Japan, Taipei and Kaohsiung City in Taiwan, Port Moresby in Papua New Guinea, and more.

"I can't wait to explore places like Madagascar, Maldives, Japan and Asia, as well as spend the summer onboard with my family," says Petterson. "The work doesn't stop though, so I don't think I'll be relaxing too much. But, for our residents, the ship will provide a new standard for global exploration, offering an exceptional blend of opulence, immersive travel and personalised service. This is not a vacation; it is a lifestyle!" **CFR**

continually working on getting the ship to where it needs to be."

At the time of going to press Villa Vie Odyssey was scheduled to launch on 20 August. Once launched, the refurbished ship offers three restaurants, five bars, four lounges, a spa and fitness centre, a library and an extended pool with two Jacuzzis. The ship has been customised to include all the comforts and amenities of home.

"The biggest difference compared to traditional cruise ships is that Odyssey will be home for residents rather than a traditional vacation space," says Petterson. "This means there's been more focus on designing for people's everyday needs versus what you see on cruise ships with

weekly turnarounds. There's less of the glamour and flashy entertainment and more practical amenities, like the business centre, the friends and family cabins, hair salons and self-service laundry facilities. The onboard experience needs to be dynamic and well considered."

One of the key focuses of the renovation was the pool deck, which was in a state of disarray after being open to the Scottish elements for four years.

"The entire pool deck has been ripped out and rebuilt," says Petterson. "We've merged the two pools, connecting them with a watered walkway. My original vision was for people to be able to swim from one to the other, but as water weighs a lot, we've instead created a surface of

Pioneering innovation and adventure

After launching two new ships in the first half of 2024, Royal Caribbean International is preparing to further expand its fleet and portfolio of private destinations. Gerard Nolan tells Laura Hyde more

Royal Caribbean International launched the largest cruise ship in the world, Icon of the Seas, in January 2024. After being christened by Argentina and Inter Miami CF footballer Lionel Messi, the ship set sail from Miami, Florida, on its inaugural passenger voyage. The vessel, which was constructed by Finnish shipbuilder Meyer Turku, is the product of more than 50 years of innovation, according to Gerard Nolan, vice president of Europe, Middle East and Africa at Royal Caribbean International.

“We’re delighted to have received our top guest satisfaction scores on Icon’s sailings since launch,” explains Nolan. “With Icon, the team set out to design something truly unique – a family holiday experience that leads the way in the industry. The response from global

media, travel partners and suppliers has been nothing short of phenomenal. Icon represents the ultimate multigenerational holiday, changing the status quo in family travel and offering the ideal holiday for everyone.”

Royal Caribbean International’s second Icon-class ship, Star of the Seas, is currently under construction at Meyer Turku in Finland, and is expected to launch in summer 2025.

In June 2024, the brand took delivery of the Oasis-class Utopia of the Seas from French shipbuilder Chantiers de l’Atlantique after two years of construction. Royal Caribbean Group president and CEO Jason Liberty was joined in the ship’s AquaTheater by the brand’s president and CEO Michael Bayley and the shipyard’s general manager Laurent Castaing, as well as

more than 1,600 crew members and workers. “This was Utopia’s first party of many and recognised the achievements of the nautical engineers, designers, architects and others,” says Nolan.

Ahead of welcoming its first guests in July, Utopia of the Seas was christened by Grammy award-winning US singer Meghan Trainor. “[Trainor is] a fitting partner for the ultimate short getaway which brings weekend energy to every day of the week,” says Nolan. “Trainor hosted the ultimate party and concert onboard for the ship’s inaugural sailing. With the combination of more than 40 ways to dine, drink and celebrate; more pools than the days to count; ways to thrill and chill; and more of all the above at Perfect Day at CocoCay – Royal Caribbean’s private island in The Bahamas – Utopia brings unmatched

In April 2024, Royal Caribbean International broke ground on the cruise line’s new Royal Beach Club Paradise Island in Nassau





Royal Caribbean International and Grammy award-winning US singer Meghan Trainor christened Utopia of the Seas in Port Canaveral, Florida, in July 2024

weekend energy for everyone and every day of the week.”

Chantiers de l’Atlantique is to build a seventh Oasis-class ship for Royal Caribbean International, which is expected to join the fleet in 2028.

As well as investing in its fleet of ships, Royal Caribbean International is also contributing to the destinations it visits. In 2025 it will open Paradise Island Beach Club in Nassau, The Bahamas. “We broke ground there in April and can’t wait to bring our guests to this 17-acre slice of paradise,” says Nolan. “At the heart of the ultimate beach day experience will be the culture and people of The Bahamas. The beach club will feature three stunning pools, two beaches, swim-up bars, private cabanas, spots for food and drinks, and more.”

In 2026, Royal Caribbean International will also open Royal Beach Club Cozumel in Mexico. “The destination will include a

combination of experiences for everyone, from striking beaches and pools to swim-up bars, a variety of dining spots – including a restaurant, bar, lounge and a street market – and hands-on experiences such as tequila tastings and cooking classes,” says Nolan. “The aim is an experience that combines familiar Royal Caribbean touches with the spirit of Mexico, alongside amenities and activities for every type of holidaymaker.

“We are continuing to invest and enhance our fleet with our next big amplification planned for Allure of the Seas in early 2025, before the ship commences its European summer season sailing the Western Mediterranean from Barcelona. It’s an incredibly exciting time for Royal Caribbean International, with Star of the Seas launching next year, new private destinations in the works and a third Icon-class and seventh Oasis-class ship on order.” **CFR**



“Utopia brings unmatched weekend energy for everyone and every day of the week”



Harmony Corp AS, rebranded and with extensive experience, offers a full range of services including turnkey outfitting, interior design, custom furniture production, and the assembly of wet units.

Our commitment to quality is evident in our attention to detail and the use of premium materials that ensure durability, sustainability and aesthetic appeal. With the capability to adapt to various specifications and project scales, we provide flexible solutions that accommodate the different requirements of our clients.

Following the rebranding, our services have expanded globally, focusing to the cruise and ferry sectors, as well as offshore vessels. Our global approach underscores ability to deliver exceptional interior solutions across a wide spectrum of maritime environments.

“Harmony” in details of Norwegian Coastal Passenger Ships

Lightweight , SoundProofing and Functional Improvements and Innovations in Havila Kystrutten Passenger Vessels:

ZERO-EMISSION, CLEAN DESIGN, NEXT GENERATIONS SHIP AWARDED



NEXT GENERATION SHIP AWARD

**HAVILA
CAPELLA**

www.harmony-craft.com | www.harmony-ms.com

THE HAVILA COASTAL PASSENGER VESSELS (LNG/HYBRID) ; 124m per ship includes 179 cabins and accommodates 640 passengers. The vessel is designed to be energy-efficient with fuel usage kept low.

Harmony MS has provided detail interior design, furniture design and turnkey interior fit-out of the passenger cabins, corridors and common areas at Passenger Vessels built at Tersen Shipyard. Research and Development improvements has made by Harmony team for lightweight solutions to be energy-efficient with fuel usage kept low. Along with this Soundproofing and prevent vibration innovations were made for Comfort Standards.

Some examples of the Soundproofing and Vibration damping, solutions

- Leaving enough gap, between cabin to cabin sandwich panels during assembling.
- Wall extension insulation application.
- Using special ceiling panel products without gap with insulation.
- Noise impact door type , etc.

Some examples of the Lightweight solutions to be energy-efficient with fuel usage kept low and zero-emission

- Floating floor systems
- Deck base covering systems
- Furniture design and selections with lightweight raw materials
- Lightweight Insulation solutions with most lightest material choices
- Wall honeycomb panels with aluminum carcass system
- Value Engineering for compression solutions

Our team was responsible for the complete interior fit-out of these ships, meeting high comfort standards, including strict soundproofing requirements.

Our team was responsible for the complete interior fit-out of these ships, meeting high comfort standards, including strict soundproofing requirements.

Cruise&Ferry Expedition Cruise Business

In association with



ADVENTURE CALLS

Expedition operators highlight the engaging destinations and experiences on their itineraries



MAGIC MOMENTS

Akvile Marozaitė of ECN on the appeal of expedition cruising



CHARTERING

SunStone Maritime Group's Carsten Lund helps new entrants

Embarking on an adventure

Akvile Marozaitė of Expedition Cruise Network gives Rebecca Gibson an insight into the appeal of expedition cruising, how the sector is developing and the actions operators are taking to protect the unique destinations that draw intrepid travellers

Akvile Marozaitė will never forget the night she joined a group of fellow cruise guests on an impromptu walk in the Madagascan jungle.

“We had decided to look for nocturnal species in the jungle and took local boats to get to and from our ship. As we sailed, spellbinding bioluminescence appeared in the water – it was incredibly magical,” she says.

This is just one of her many unforgettable experiences while expedition cruising. Another happened during an early-morning visit to a coastal village in West Papua. “We woke at 4am and boarded Zodiacs in the darkness, with the incredible Milky Way above us as we travelled to the village,” says Marozaitė. “I held a torch for the Zodiac driver as we reached the jetty and then we walked in the starlight through the jungle to a tree, where we sat quietly waiting for birds of paradise to congregate. We shared a silent moment of wonder when they did.”

Marozaitė considers herself very lucky to have joined “quite a few” expedition cruises over the years, particularly during her time working for Silversea Cruises and Albatros Expeditions.

“I’ve travelled extensively in the Pacific Ocean, spent an entire season in the

Russian Far East, visited both Antarctica and the Galapagos Islands twice, and experienced Mexico’s Baja California peninsula,” she says. “The Sea of Cortez still stands out to me as one of the best places in the world to see whales, dolphins and incredible desert-like scenery.

“Each expedition has something unique to offer. Learning from experts about a place adds an extra dimension of wonder – these are perhaps the reasons why I fell in love with this form of travel and have a seemingly infinite passion for it.”

“At their core, expedition cruises have always been about exploring unique destinations”

Expedition cruises are ideal for those who seek adventure in some of the world’s most remote destinations. The sector was first established in the 1960s, when Swedish-American explorer and entrepreneur Lars-Eric Lindblad founded his own cruise line and took the first paying customers to destinations previously only visited by scientists and explorers. Lindblad Expeditions sailed to Antarctica in 1966

and the Galapagos Islands in 1967. Other lines followed, bringing with them new ships and itineraries.

“We saw a huge boom throughout the 1990s, with the addition of Quark Expeditions, Aurora Expeditions and Hapag-Lloyd Cruises, which meant many more ships and destinations,” says Marozaitė. “Most excitingly, during this time we saw the addition of shore landings, outings and activities, which remains a favourite part of the expedition experience to this day.”

In the late 2000s, Silversea and Ponant brought new modern, luxury tonnage to Antarctica, which Marozaitė says spurred demand for luxury, onboard experiences. “For the past 20 years the sector has grown steadily, and between 2019 and



170N
LALIZAS
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KEYNOTE

2023 we saw significant increase in capacity with an extra 39 ships joining the market,” she says. “Today, there are 101 expedition ships in operation worldwide (totalling 16,363 berths), and five new expedition ships are expected to join the market between 2024 and 2027. While order books show that ship capacity growth will slow, it’s a dynamic and increasingly competitive market with new entrants joining all the time.”

Over the past six decades, both the ships and the guest experiences offered by expedition cruise operators have changed. Initially, operators chartered vessels from Russian authorities, or repurposed icebreakers, small cruise ships and ferries. They offered basic amenities, minimal entertainment and a strong focus on education and exploration. Although modern expedition ships are still small and carry on average fewer than 200 passengers, they are now purpose-built with guest comfort and experience in mind. Consequently, many offer onboard luxuries, such as suites and staterooms with private balconies, spas, fine-dining restaurants and comfortable observation lounges.

“As an expedition cruise is all about in-depth exploration, the ships are small so they aren’t limited to calling at places with port facilities but can instead reach truly remote sites,” says Marozait. “Onboard activities still typically include expert-led seminars, daily briefings and lively discussions with fellow adventurers, but some companies also offer cookery courses and yoga, for example. Outdoor activities led by expert guides, such as hikes, Zodiac cruising, paddle boarding, kayaking and trips in helicopters or submersibles, are all popular. Hence, new ships need to be designed to accommodate equipment for these specialist activities too.”

Marozait cites her recent visit to the Galapagos Islands onboard Lindblad Cruises’ National Geographic Endeavour II as an example of the type of experience on offer.

“It was fantastic; the itinerary was crafted to maximise every moment as we explored the southeastern and central parts of the archipelago where we hiked to see land iguanas, explored volcanic areas and watched sea lions napping on white-sand beaches,” she says. “The ship had a relaxed and social atmosphere, and



Modern expedition cruise ships, such as those operated by Aqua Expeditions, often have luxurious suites for guests

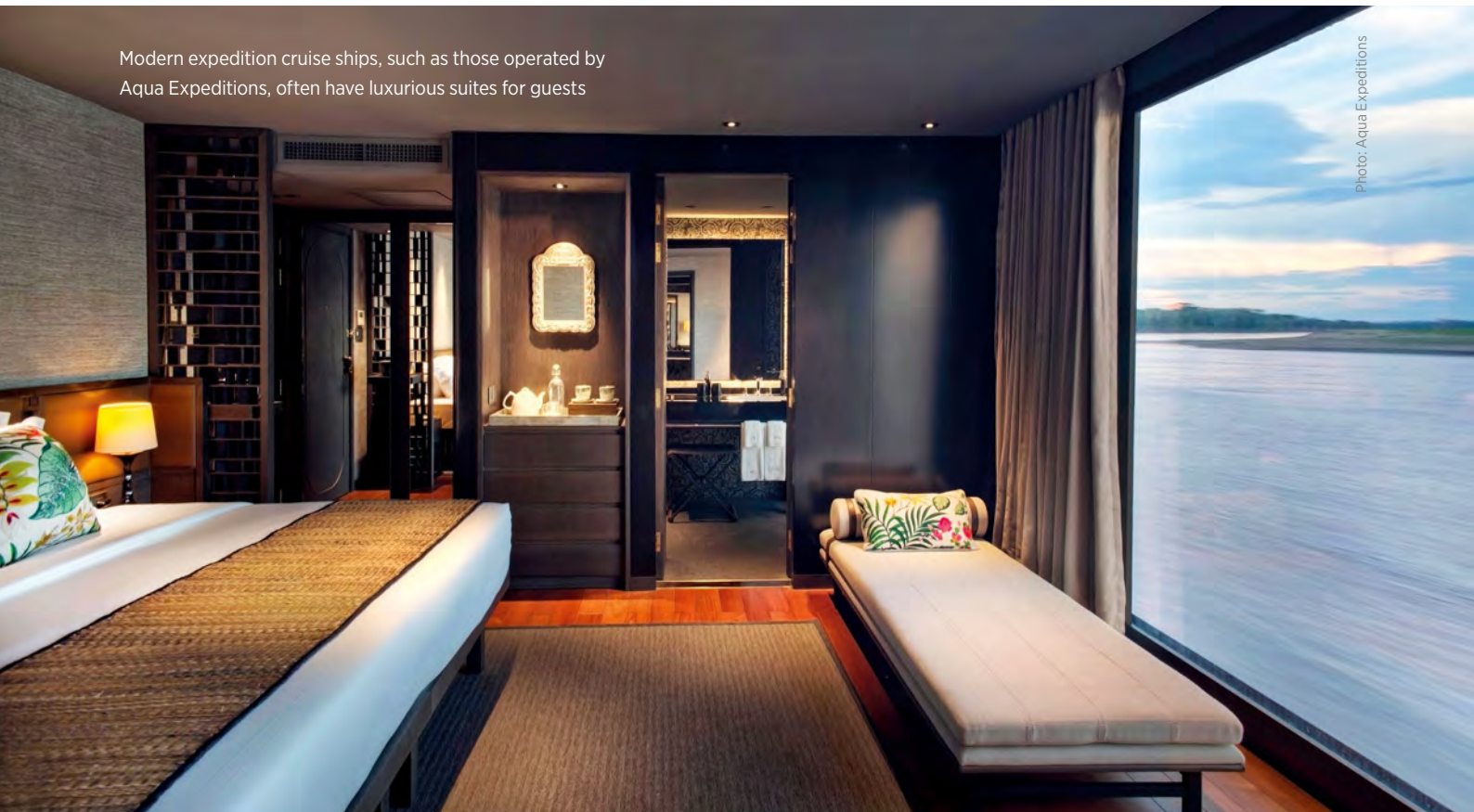
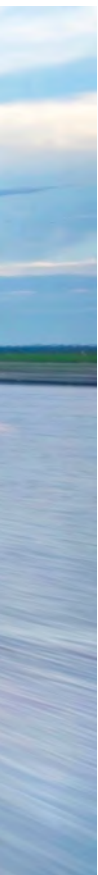


Photo: Aqua Expeditions

Aqua Expeditions' Aria Amazon operates river expeditions on the Amazon, offering guests the chance to explore the world's largest rainforest



KEYNOTE



Photos: UnCruise Adventures



The Sea of Cortez in the Gulf of California is one of the best places in the world to see whales and dolphins, says Akvile Marozaitė

in addition to pursuits like kayaking, snorkelling and paddle boarding, we also enjoyed incredible onboard hospitality, including yoga on the deck together.”

As more people learn about the sector and the unique opportunities it provides for them to explore remote destinations and encounter rare wildlife in safety and comfort, the guest demographic is changing.

“Clients are becoming a little younger and there are more solo travellers,” says Marozaitė, explaining that expedition is increasingly appealing to adventurous travellers who may never have considered cruising before. “In certain ways, the pandemic had a positive effect, making people reassess various aspects of life,

including the importance of taking a special holiday or being more adventurous now instead of waiting until later in life.”

Marozaitė is also helping to promote expedition cruising in her role as CEO of the Expedition Cruise Network (ECN). It was established in 2023 as a commercial business-to-business membership organisation to connect expedition cruise operators with travel trade professionals around the world.

“We provide a voice for an incredibly dynamic sector which has grown exponentially – faster than any other type of cruising – over the past few years,” says Marozaitė. “ECN members must meet certain criteria to ensure they embody the values of our network. They must offer a

cruise-like onboard experience with a focus on exploration and the size of their ships must not restrict the destinations they can visit, or cater to more than 500 passengers. We also want to ensure the best possible guest experience, so their onboard teams must have intrinsic knowledge of the destinations and offer memorable onboard and onshore experiences and activities that cater to passengers’ interests.”

ECN is also helping members to showcase the diverse destinations they visit.

“At their core, expedition cruises have always been about exploring unique destinations,” says Marozaitė. “There is a destination for everyone. It’s all about getting off the beaten path and exploring the best these places have to offer.”

Marozaitis recommends that those who are keen to see wildlife choose cruises to renowned destinations such as The Galapagos and Antarctica, as well as lesser-known but “equally phenomenal and unique” places like Baja California, New Zealand’s Sub-Antarctic Islands and Australia’s Kimberley Coast.

Meanwhile, destinations such as Papua New Guinea and various South Pacific Islands offer “mind-blowing cultural experiences”, which are often combined with water-based activities in diverse coral reef systems. “Those looking for a softer adventure can sail with Aranui Cruises to experience incredible cultural immersion in French Polynesia,” adds Marozaitis. “Many may also be surprised to know that the UK and Iceland are two of the fastest-growing expedition cruise destinations as they have both unique natural coastal features and rich human history – two of the components operators look for when choosing destinations.”

Expedition cruising is not restricted to the oceans, however. “There are some incredible river experiences where guests can travel down the Amazon in Peru, or the Mekong River in Cambodia and Vietnam with Aqua Expeditions,” says Marozaitis. “Or they can experience the Ganges river and Indian hospitality onboard Antara Cruises’ ships.”

With so many of the world’s waters still unchartered, Marozaitis says there is “no doubt” that the number of expedition cruise destinations will increase. “The travel trade wants to see more places in Africa, Asia and South America on itineraries, but there is still space to grow in existing expedition destinations such as The Kimberley region, Papua New Guinea, Micronesia, Melanesia and West Africa.”

Another element that has remained a consistent priority for operators since the advent of expedition cruising is the need to respect the environment, biodiversity and local communities in the destinations they visit.

“From the beginning, expedition cruising has focused on respecting the environment with the hope that when people experienced these beautiful and unique

places for themselves, it would lead to a desire to preserve them,” says Marozaitis. “All ECN members take their carbon footprint and their impact on both wildlife and local communities extremely seriously, so they’re working to detailed sustainability plans and contributing to citizen science projects. The sector also works with voluntary self-regulatory organisations and

committed to keep moving towards becoming a fully sustainable form of travel and working closely with our cruise brands to reduce our impact on destinations and achieve the United Nations’ net-zero carbon emissions goal by 2050. We’ve got a long way to go but we’re implementing a number of initiatives to help the network get there.”

“From the beginning, expedition cruising has focused on respecting the environment”

educate our cruise guests and the travel trade community on sustainability, climate change and human impact.”

In addition, ECN members follow strict guidelines on the size of ships to prevent overcrowding and a number of cruise lines are developing hybrid-powered vessels.

“Sustainability is at the forefront of ECN’s strategies and central to the success of our members,” says Marozaitis. “We’re

ECN also remains committed to connecting ship operators with the travel trade community to increase knowledge about the sector and position expedition cruising as an excellent travel choice, says Marozaitis. “As the sector grows, we’ll continue to act as its global voice, spreading our passion for expedition travel and supporting our members along the way.” **CFR**

Photo: Lina Stock/Divergent Travelers

Expedition brands immerse their guests in the destinations by taking them on Zodiac trips to places like Cierva Cove in Antarctica



Ready for exploration

What's required from a cruise ship that will travel to the far reaches of the globe? *CFR* speaks with four exploration specialists to find out more

With millennials – and the generations that follow – widely reported to prefer experiences over possessions, it's not surprising that expedition cruising is surging in popularity. Passenger numbers have increased by 71 per cent from 2019 to 2023 according to Cruise Line International Association's *2024 State of the Cruise Industry Report*, as the opportunity to explore the far reaches of the globe proves irresistible for modern travellers.

The lines that offer expedition cruises need ships that are up to the task, whether that be accessing remote waterways or navigating polar regions.

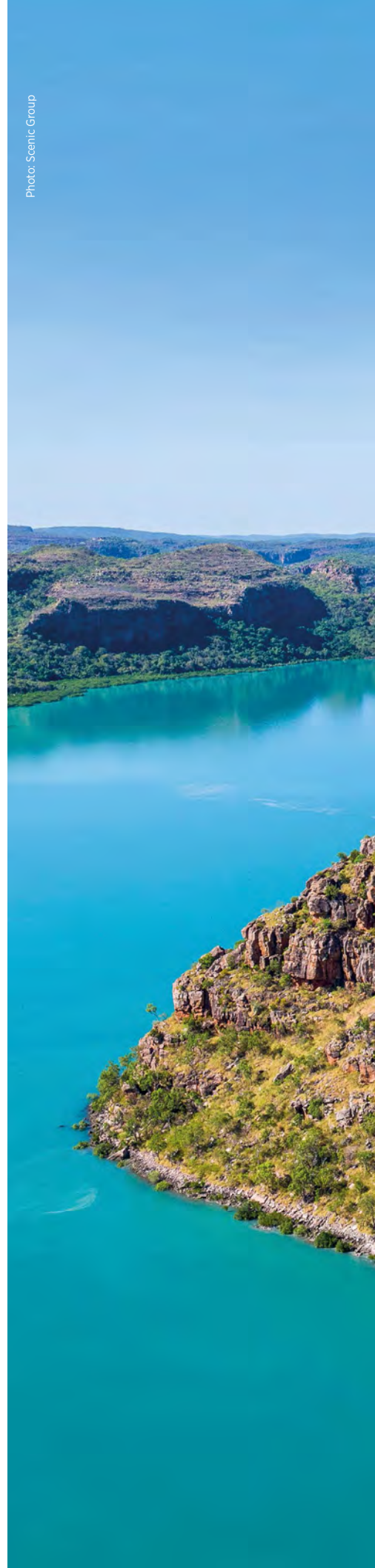
Scenic Group's fleet includes Scenic Eclipse I and II, which both have Ice-class 1A Super and Polar-class 6 ratings. "These Discovery Yachts can access 43 ports in the Antarctic region, making guests more likely to be able to see wildlife and explore further than with anyone else," explains Nick Hughes, sales, strategy and partnerships director for Scenic Group UK and Ireland. "Scenic Eclipse is purpose-built for expedition cruising, boasting custom stabilisers which provide greater stability, a strengthened hull, forward bow thrusters, an electronic Azipod propulsion system, advanced sonar, and environmentally sustainable systems. These enable guests to get off the ship

within 20 minutes, so we can be flexible with stops for viewing wildlife.

"To elevate the guest experience, Scenic Eclipse is the only ship to have two onboard helicopters and a submersible. These allow for alternative views of some of the world's most remote locations, such as Snow Hill Island, home to the world's northernmost Emperor Penguin colony, and only accessible by helicopter. As the quietest helicopters in the skies, the H130 sets the standards for tourism operations worldwide. Thanks to the launch of the submersible Scenic Neptune onboard Scenic Eclipse II this year, guests can experience 270-degree views of the ocean up to 100 metres below the surface."

Antara Cruises offers river cruises across India on its fleet of six ships, which feature low air and water drafts, enabling them to operate in low water depths and access isolated areas.

The cruise line prioritised local craftsmanship on its river cruise ship, Ganga Vilas, which has sailed the Indo-Bangladesh route since 2009. "Our ships are locally handcrafted, and the design is meticulously overseen by our in-house team," says Arjun Sinsinwar, chief inspiration officer at Antara Cruises. "Thoughtful design features and selections make our expedition cruise ships exceptionally well-suited for adventurous



Cruise guests onboard Scenic Eclipse II can explore two billion years of natural history along the isolated The Kimberley coast in Western Australia



We build for beyond.



Whether the destination is to the remotest parts of the planet or to the cultural capitals of the world, SunStone provides all-in-one B2B solutions for small ship cruising on long-term or seasonal charters in cold and warm waters.

Our clients and partners depend on SunStone's commitment to environmental sustainability and pioneering initiatives to build a class of expedition vessels that delivers efficiency, safety, and comfort.



Photo: Antara

Antara Cruises' fleet of six ships sail river cruises across India to explore remote and isolated destinations

and immersive experiences in some of the world's most remote and beautiful locations; Antara's world-class fleet are not only key to pioneering privileged access to hidden cultural and natural heritage but have evolved as part of them."

There are practical considerations for exploration, too. "To ensure self-sufficiency on extended journeys, our vessels are equipped with numerous systems, such as onboard water filtration plants and water tanks, as well as walk-in freezers and ample storage, ensuring we can carry all necessary provisions for long voyages," says Sinsinwar. "A large fuel tank further enhances our ships' capability to operate for months without the need to refuel, whilst pollution prevention technologies prevent any leakage into the waterways."

For the past four decades Aranui Cruises has been taking guests to explore remote communities in the Marquesas Islands of French Polynesia. The company has recently added the Austral Islands to its itineraries onboard its custom-built vessel, Aranui 5. "As a responsible cruise line, we hold the certification of a 'Biodiversity Protection Company' and we actively partner with local organisations to safeguard the islands," says Vaima Devimeux, Europe representative for Aranui Cruises. "We have also implemented International Security Management to optimise our security policies and standards for passengers whilst sailing in remote waters. Aranui 5 conforms to MARPOL standard, which govern international rules on marine pollution, aiming to minimise the ship's carbon footprint, contributing to the preservation of the ocean, the islands and the local communities."

The inclusion of these features hasn't meant compromising the guest experience. "The dual-purpose ship was designed and built in Huanghai shipyard in China and launched in 2015 to offer all the comforts of a cruise liner while operating as a supply ship built for remote voyages," says Devimeux. "With a total length of 126 metres and a width of 22 metres, the ship can accommodate approximately 230 passengers in 103 cabins, and includes three bars, an outdoor swimming pool, and the first tattoo studio at sea."

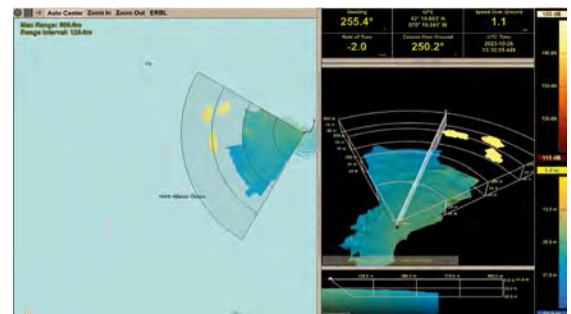
Safer shipping

Technology is essential for safe passage in remote waters. We profile two solutions that are proving essential for cruise lines

Expedition vessels face unique challenges in remote waters, often relying on their own mapping due to the lack of proper hydrographics. NAPA technology provides real-time insights

for precise ship stability and emergency management. "Our solutions combine advanced data modelling with hyper-realistic simulations," says Markus Tompuri, chief stability officer at NAPA. "These 3D models form the basis of our onboard software, offering accurate and reliable information for safe operations. NAPA Stability allows precise management of both intact and damage stability. In emergencies, the NAPA Emergency Computer estimates survivability and supports Safe Return to Port. NAPA Fleet Intelligence transfers this information shoreside, offering real-time situational awareness without burdening crews."

Advanced technology is essential not just for remote navigation but also for operating in whale habitats, ensuring adherence to safe practices and minimising environmental impact.



FarSounder has a benign, active forward looking sonar technology, which allows expedition ships to see and avoid whales in real-time. Cassie Stetkiewicz, director of operations at FarSounder, explains: "Recently, we have been studying the performance of our Argos FLS to detect the presence of humpback whales. These controlled engineering tests gathered target data and measurements, proving the Argos system consistently detected humpback whales out to 500-metre range using our standard Argos FLS product and its standard functionality."

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Further information online at www.voith.com/meteorIV

VOITH



SunStone's Boundless series, designed by OSK Design with interiors by Tomas Tillberg Design, offers passengers a luxurious onboard experience

AE Expeditions, part of Aurora Expeditions, offers expedition cruises on its ships Greg Mortimer and Sylvia Earle, with a third ship, Douglas Mawson, launching in December 2025. All are part of SunStone Maritime Group's Infinity-class series.

Greg Mortimer was the first passenger ship in the fleet to feature the X-Bow hull design, which not only reduces fuel consumption and overall emissions, but also offers a smoother and quieter ride for passengers, according to AE Expeditions. The hull design also offers greater stability in challenging environments, enabling ships to continue in difficult weather conditions.

"The design of these vessels focuses on overall efficiency and operability with a comfortable passenger experience," says Andrew Turner, sales director for Europe, Middle East, and Africa at AE Expeditions. "The ships' size is optimised to reduce fuel consumption and environmental impact. This is also minimised thanks to the ships' anchoring system, which allows it to remain in a set position without a physical anchor, minimising harm to delicate seabeds. The ships' onboard desalination plants enable

us to convert seawater into fresh water that's safe to drink, which means ships can carry less fresh water on sea crossings, further reducing fuel consumption."

The interior of expedition cruise ships is just as thoughtfully considered. Greg Mortimer's interior was designed by Tomas Tillberg Design. "Expedition cruise guests aren't looking for a huge

"We put a lot of effort into choosing the furniture, furnishings and the interior layouts to create a cosy and calming atmosphere onboard each vessel."

"Expedition cruise vessels must embody the authentic journey and enhance the experience of the surrounding nature of the unique destination," says Emilie Posniak

"Thoughtful design features make our expedition cruise ships exceptionally well-suited for adventurous and immersive experiences"

Arjun Sinsinwar, Antara Cruises

ship with aqua parks and glamorous entertainment options; they want a ship that sails smoothly and has warm and comfortable lounges, dining venues and cabins to relax in after a long day of outdoor adventures," says Nédgé Louis-Jacques, partner and vice president of design at Tomas Tillberg Design.

Hansen, architect at OSK Design, the Danish naval architects behind SunStone's Boundless series. Hansen says the design "underscores how the right ship can seamlessly balance onboard experience, comfort and adventure, while aligning with the ethos of exploration and sustainability." [CFR](#)

Lowering the entry barrier

SunStone Maritime Group's Carsten Lund explains to Alex Smith how the company's technical expertise is enabling its charterers to deliver a quality cruise experience

Those weighing up the possibility of entering the cruise industry must take a formidable risk.

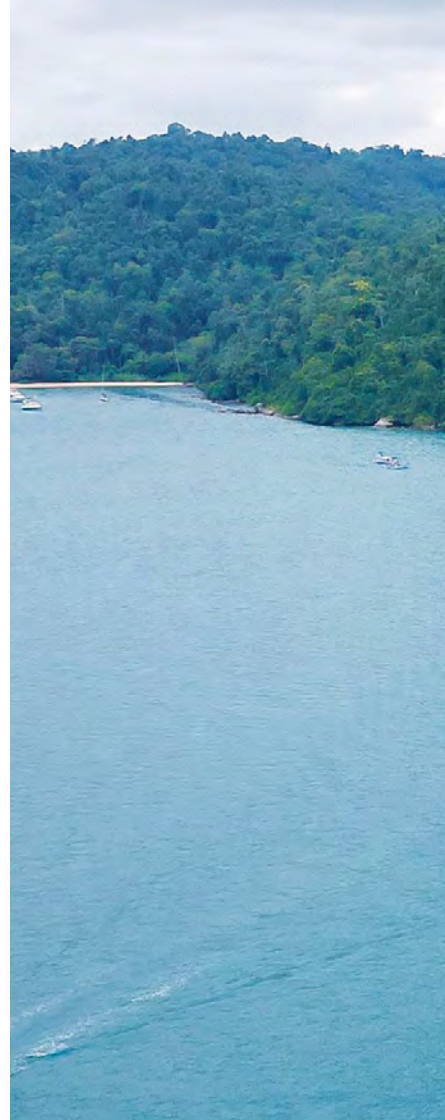
Buying a ship requires a significant investment, while building one is an even more expensive prospect.

There is, however, another option. Chartering agreements in which a shipowner hires out their vessel to a client provides an alternative path into the cruise industry, lowering the barrier of entry for potential operators.

One of the experts in this type of arrangement is SunStone Maritime

Group, which has been delivering chartering services for over three decades. The company began providing management services for all types of passenger ships, before focusing specifically on the expedition cruise industry from 2003.

"The barrier for entry into the cruise industry is extremely high," says Carsten Lund, SunStone's chief commercial officer. "Our model provides an opportunity for our clients to offer an expedition cruise product without necessarily having a wealth of maritime





SunStone Maritime Group charters vessels to a range of expedition operators, including Aurora Expeditions and Quark Expeditions

experience when it comes to operating the ships themselves. We can make sure we comply with all the rules and regulations and be as efficient as possible, taking some of the risk away from the equation for our clients.”

The terms of the arrangement between charterer and shipowner can vary depending on the charterer’s needs

and level of expertise in the industry, explains Lund.

“We aim to be a one-stop-shop for charterers, whatever their needs” he says. “There is a division of responsibility between us and our clients, where we ensure that the ship is operating well from a technical standpoint. For some of our clients, this will just include a

deck and engine charter, while others will require help with finding a hotel concessionaire to manage the hotel product. This allows our clients to focus on the passenger side of operations.”

While an operator may not have quite the same flexibility in design when chartering a ship as it would have if it owned the vessel, SunStone allows its

INTERVIEW

clients to significantly influence how their ships look while they sail for them. Each vessel will bear the livery of the charterer throughout the time of their agreement, and SunStone can adapt interiors to match, says Lund.

“We’ve always been able to offer customisation on the interior of our vessels, especially for our longer-term charters,” he says. “Our clients are offering different products to different demographics, and they will have certain expectations which we have to provide for.”

SunStone’s flexibility has been even more pronounced with its series of newbuild ships, the Infinity class. By forming 10- to 15-year agreements with its charterers at the start of the construction process, it can provide them with a significant degree of influence over the design and configuration of the vessel.

“Our interior designers can work with the charterer to determine what kind

of look and feel they want, customising everything from colours and materials to furnishings and lighting,” explains Lund. “We can also change quite a lot about the division of space onboard and the ship’s capacity. While there’s limited



“We made a promise to our clients a long time ago that we will never be in competition with them”

scope to change the superstructure, we’ve even been able to include a two-deck observation lounge on some of our Infinity-class vessels, as opposed to open observation decks on others.”

Despite its long experience within the industry, SunStone has never sold

directly to passengers. The decision to remain purely a shipowner rather than an operator forms an important part of its offering to charterers, suggests Lund.

“We made a promise to our clients a long time ago that we will never be in

competition with them,” he says. “We will never sell tickets ourselves. We’re aiming to provide the ships and technical operation services, which is at the core of the SunStone DNA. It’s what we believe we are best at, and it enables our clients to do what they are best at.” **CFR**





An on-hand expert

By Mark Henderson, Magicman

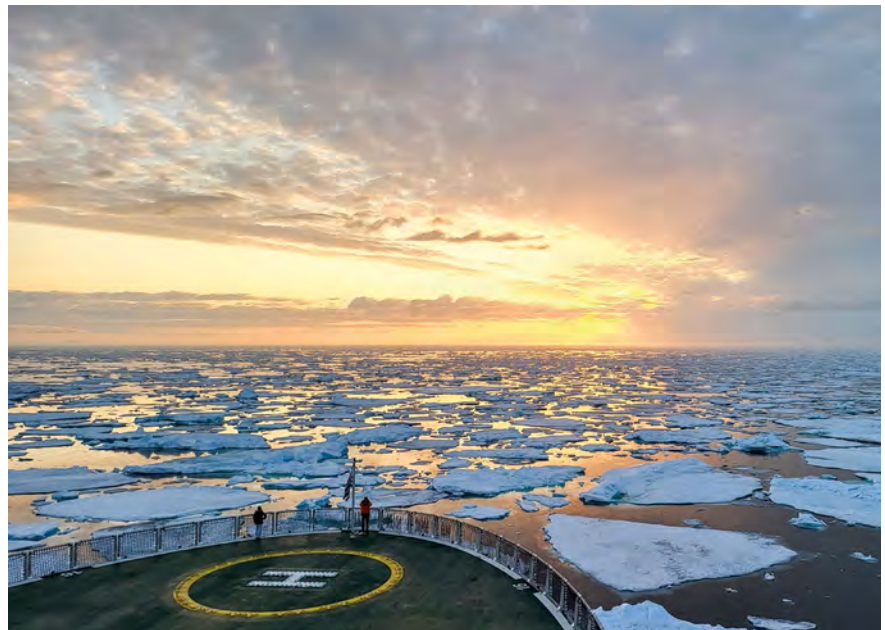
Magicman can travel to the world's most remote destinations to complete repair and restoration projects on expedition cruise ships, helping shipowners to cut the time, costs and waste associated with traditional refurbishments

Passenger ship operators must regularly maintain and update their vessels to ensure they remain safe, seaworthy and aesthetically appealing for guests. However, this can be challenging for expedition cruise lines whose ships are built with specialist systems and equipment to enable them to safely navigate challenging and environmentally sensitive waters while sailing in remote regions of the world.

To complete projects quickly without disrupting planned itineraries, these operators must work with a partner like UK-based firm Magicman, which has more than 30 years' experience in delivering specialised in-situ repair services in multiple markets worldwide. Magicman has skilled teams of renovation experts that can travel to the world's most remote ports to carry out work onboard expedition cruise ships while they are docked or in service.

Magicman collaborates closely with the cruise line to meticulously plan projects well in advance to ensure it can transport both materials and its team members to the vessel. Once onboard, Magicman's team coordinates with the crew to carry out work quickly and efficiently, allowing the cruise line to minimise disruption for guests. For example, the team will typically repair damaged surfaces in cabins while guests are on excursions or complete work in the public spaces during off-peak hours.

Repairing and restoring damaged surfaces, furniture, fixtures or other items, rather than replacing them, offers



Expedition cruise ships sail to remote regions of the world, making it challenging to carry out refurbishment projects

multiple benefits for expedition cruise operators. One of the biggest advantages is that the process is much quicker and more cost-effective than sourcing, shipping and installing new items.

By extending the lifecycle of existing products through refurbishing rather than scrapping them, shipowners can also minimise the amount of waste going to landfill and decrease the associated carbon emissions. This helps them to reduce their environmental impact and align more closely with the principles of the circular economy.

Through its skills and expertise, Magicman helps expedition cruise

operators to easily maintain onboard spaces, ensuring they retain both their functionality and aesthetic appeal for many years. At the same time, Magicman plays an integral role in helping cruise brands to achieve their long-term environmental sustainability goals and minimise their environmental impact while they explore some of the most remote regions of the world. This commitment to sustainability not only protects the environment, but will also ensure the long-term viability and success of expedition cruising. [CFR](#)

Mark Henderson is CEO of Magicman

FEATURE

Adventure calls

Alice Chambers talks to leading operators about some of their most engaging expedition destinations



Expeditions to Antarctica typically depart from Ushuaia, Argentina, to make the 750-plus mile journey across the Drake Passage to the ice-covered continent. Antarctic itineraries offer unrivalled opportunities to explore its landscape and geological wonders.

AE Expeditions (part of Aurora Expeditions) provides a diverse excursion programme including snorkelling, scuba diving, snowshoeing, ice camping, skiing and alpine trekking. The region remains

a popular expedition destination for the cruise line, which has also released new voyages to East Antarctica and the Ross Sea, departing from Hobart, Australia, and Dunedin, New Zealand.

Other popular activities in Antarctica include Zodiac excursions, kayaking and wildlife watching. “Our goal is to get guests off the ship and out into the polar landscapes as often as possible,” says Sarah Schlederer, account manager for the UK and Ireland at Quark

Expeditions, who highlights unique experiences like paddleboarding with penguins and flightseeing over glaciers as available activities.

The Arctic offers a similar sense of icy adventure, along with historical culture with stunning landscapes.

“Ilulissat is the storybook Arctic town with a staggering natural backdrop,” says Steffan Danino of Albatros Expeditions. “Just a short walk from town lies the Unesco World Heritage Site of Ilulissat



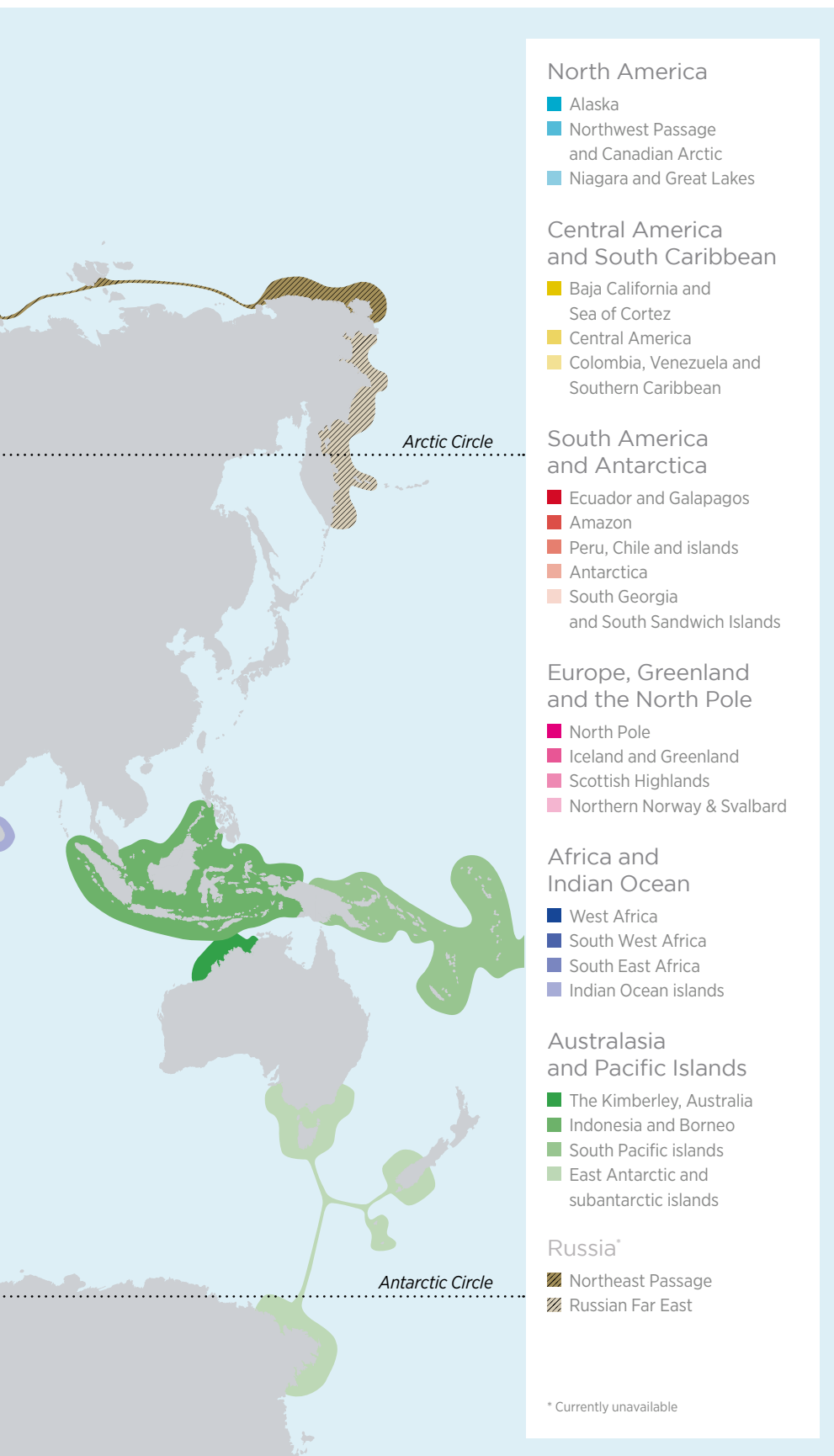
AE Expeditions offers a range of itineraries that explore Antarctica

Exploring the seas

An at-a-glance overview of the world's primary expedition cruise regions

● North Pole





ice fjord, a 70 by 20-kilometre fjord completely choked with ice, produced by the largest and most active glacier outside Antarctica. The views are simply mind-blowing here and guests can explore the fjord further with a cruise amongst the icebergs.”

Canada’s Arctic beauty includes the Gulf of Alaska, home to Glacier Bay and the Inside Passage. Expedition cruises often start in Vancouver, Canada, and head north to this region where Alaska’s largest glaciers can be found. For example, Maple Leaf Adventure Company, which has been operating since 1986, offers educational itineraries along the British Columbia coast, including the Great Bear Rainforest and Haida Gwaii’s remote villages.

Inland expeditions

Expedition cruises are not just for oceans; lake and river exploration is also popular. For instance, Ponant and Viking Cruises sail on Lake Superior, the world’s largest freshwater lake, with many itineraries stopping at Thunder Bay. The city entertains cruise guests with its cultural attractions such as The Spirit Garden, which is a space to honour the history and cultures of its indigenous people, and close access to the lake.

“Guests love the fresh air, forests and clean water, indigenous and global cultural influences, and friendly residents at Thunder Bay while operators enjoy peace of mind of comprehensive local shore excursion and vessel servicing capacity,” says Paul Pepe, manager of tourism for Tourism Thunder Bay.

Meanwhile, Antara Cruises offers itineraries on the Ganges River in India, highlighting ancient temples and bustling markets. The cruise line aims to connect guests with the region’s mythologies and monuments on rivers that were once the highways for trade.

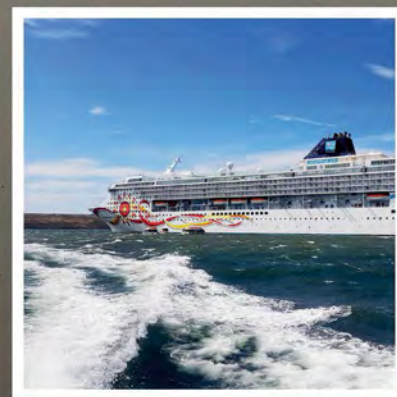
Diving destinations

For water-based activities, Aqua Expeditions recommends Indonesia. The country’s 18,000 islands provide the prime conditions for bespoke excursions,



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Aqua Expeditions features numerous cruises in Indonesia that include visiting the Spice Islands

including snorkelling with whale sharks in Saleh Bay and swimming with stingless jellyfish in the Hidden Lake Lenmakana on the island of Waigeo.

Heritage Expeditions and Coral Expeditions also explore Indonesian islands. Heritage Expeditions provides immersive cultural interactions, like joining Malaita's Kwaio people in a sacred dance and scientific discoveries.

"Not only do our guests tick off bucket-list adventures, but they also make meaningful contributions to science, conservation and support the remote villages they experience with us and return as ambassadors for these special places," says Aaron Russ, director and expedition leader at Heritage Expeditions.

For over four decades, Coral Expeditions has led the way in expedition cruising and forged an industry exploring some of the world's great wilderness regions. The Australian owned and operated company's roots run deep in Australia and surrounds, and its commitment to sharing its wonders with fellow explorers remains unwavering.

Coral Expeditions' small ships, designed for remote regions with shallow drafts, navigate secluded destinations like the reef systems, rivers and shores in Indonesia's Raja Ampat Islands, Papua New Guinea's remote villages and the coast of The Kimberley in Australia.

Recognising the value of The Kimberley as a prime destination for expedition cruises, Scenic Group has included it as a new itinerary for 2024. "The Kimberley

Exploring the South

French Polynesia, with its 118 islands and low population density, exemplifies remoteness. Post-pandemic regulations have limited large ships with up to 2,500 passengers, benefiting lines with smaller expedition ships that can offer more intimate and exclusive experiences in this area.

Aranui Cruises has been taking guests to meet communities in the Marquesas

"Not only do our guests tick off bucket-list adventures, but they also make meaningful contributions to science"

Aaron Russ, Heritage Expeditions

is one of the world's most rugged, remote and untouched wilderness regions with 80-metre-high sandstone cliffs and mangrove swamps home to crocodiles, falcons, egrets and kingfishers," says Nick Hughes, sales strategy and partnerships director for the cruise line.

Islands of French Polynesia for over 40 years and has recently expanded its range of itineraries to include the Austral Islands. The cruise line says that the archipelago of five islands introduces guests to a "mysterious" land with pristine lagoons and unique landscapes.

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Coral Expeditions operates in Australia, including Stanley Island in the Lakefield National Park

For example, Rurutu's coastline is dotted with basalt and limestone cliffs that shelter ancient burial sites.

South America is also a hot spot for cruise exploration. The Galapagos Islands, with their endemic species and famous for inspiring Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, are a bucket-list destination. The islands are protected as part of Ecuador's Galapagos National Park and Marine Reserve so cruise lines must follow strict regulations. Metropolitan Touring designs itineraries focused on the "Big 15" Galapagos species while ensuring environmental responsibility.

The Patagonia Fjords are another popular destination in South America, with towering glaciers, rainforests and indigenous community visits. Australis has operated here since the 1990s, providing four-night itineraries between September and April.

"We know these waters and their wildlife intimately," says Frederic Guillemard, sales and marketing manager for Europe and Asia at Australis. "As a cruise line, we understand what it takes to provide a once-in-a-lifetime experience

without compromising on comfort in exchange for this intrepid approach."

Various cruise lines offer trips to the Falkland Islands, 300 miles east of Patagonia, on a range of ships, from small icebreaking yachts to large luxury vessels.

Carly East, tourism coordinator at Sullivan Shipping Services, says: "The Falkland Islands are an unforgettable shore excursion. Our expert guides enhance the experience, helping guests immerse themselves in stunning landscapes and unique wildlife, from penguins to majestic albatrosses."

Oceanwide Expeditions' Antarctica itineraries also focus on wildlife, with opportunities to see endemic bird species in the Falklands and South Georgia. Stops at Carcass Island, Saunders Island and St. Andrews Bay offer guests close encounters with King, Magellanic, and Gentoo penguins, along with a variety of waders and passerine birds, including Cobb's wrens and tussock-birds.

Expedition cruises meet the growing demand for adventure and discovery, and the variety of itineraries now on offer ensures each journey is memorable and deeply connected to nature. **CFR**

ASSOCIATIONS FOR EXPLORATION

Find out more about expedition cruise itineraries from the following associations.

North America

- Cruise Atlantic Canada
- Cruise Lines Industry Association
- Great Lakes St Lawrence Seaway System
- The Great Lakes Cruise Association

Central America & South Caribbean

- Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association

South America & Antarctica

- Galapagos National Park
- International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators

Europe, Greenland & Arctic

- Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators
- Cruise Northern Norway & Svalbard
- Cruise Iceland
- Expedition Cruise Network

Australasia & Pacific Islands

- Australia Cruise Association
- South Pacific Cruise Alliance

INTERFERRY2024

The 48th ANNUAL INTERFERRY CONFERENCE



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GENERAL REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

Interferry2024 general registration, when members and non-members alike can register, is now open. Early Bird pricing for all registrations ends on September 14.

Interferry2024 will be held at the Palais des Congrès which is the largest meeting facility in Marrakech. The Mövenpick Marrakech, our conference hotel, is located adjacent to the venue. Our annual conference will feature topical speakers and sessions, ferry leaders panels, outstanding networking opportunities, and a technical tour. The full conference program with sessions, speakers and schedule is currently posted on InterferryConference.com.

Sponsors and exhibitors will enjoy a large exhibition area in which to display their products and services. A limited number of exhibit spaces remain and will likely sell out by the end of August – so contact us soon if you're interested!

For the latest info check the conference website, follow us on LinkedIn and subscribe to our mailing list.

"Interferry welcomes delegates to our first ever conference on the African Continent in Marrakech, Morocco, October 26-30, 2024!"

Mike Corrigan – CEO, Interferry

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A FLEXIBLE FUTURE

Joëlle Croc, Frederic Pouget and Arnaud Le Poulichet of Brittany Ferries discuss five new vessels



GREEN AGENDA

Mike Corrigan outlines Interferry's key priorities



SAFE SAILING

Mary Ann Pastrana talks about FastCat's growing fleet

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Safety, security and sustainability

Mike Corrigan outlines the key themes and speaker lineup for Interferry2024 and urges governments to use carbon tax revenues to invest in onshore power supply



MIKE CORRIGAN

A Canadian former energy industry executive, Mike Corrigan joined global ferry association Interferry in 2017 after 14 years with BC Ferries – among the world's largest ferry operators – where he was president and CEO from 2012.

Preparations for the 48th annual Interferry conference are in full swing, and a record number of members have already signed up to join us in Marrakesh, Morocco, from 26-30 October 2024. The 2023 conference sold out weeks in advance and we're anticipating equally high demand this year, so we urge those wanting to participate in our marquee global event to complete their registration.

Taking place on 28-29 October, our Speakers Program will feature representatives from a cross-section of the world's ferry community, including ferry line executives from all four corners of the world and supplier members whose activities are related to the conference themes of safety, security and sustainability.

Conference host and Interferry president Ronny Moriana Glindemann of FRS/DFDS is leading the programme. Although our sector

is still male-dominated, I'm pleased to report that we have three well-respected female ferry leaders on the stage. Greta Bédard, the first woman to hold the position of president and CEO of Canada's Société des traversiers du Québec, will give insights from the Canadian East Coast ferry sector. Stena Line's chief commercial officer Elisabeth Lönne will talk about the transformation efforts at the Sweden-headquartered ferry company. Indonesia is probably the world's most ferry-dependent nation, and I am therefore extremely proud to welcome ASDP Indonesia Ferry CEO Ira Puspawati to one of the ferry leaders panels. Puspawati, whose leadership has been marked by innovative strategies and operational enhancements, will also discuss the Indonesian ferry system's challenges and opportunities.

Other distinguished speakers will include: Götz Becker, CEO of FRS and Interferry board



Interferry2024 attendees will learn more about ASDP Indonesia Ferry's services and the state of the Indonesian ferry market during one of the sessions

Photo: ASDP

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Interferry2024 will be hosted at the Palais des Congrès in Marrakesh, Morocco, marking the first time the association has held the annual conference on the African continent

vice chairman; Torben Carlsen, CEO of DFDS, who has been instrumental in the company's expansion during the past 15 years; Matteo Catani, CEO of GNV, a leading Western Mediterranean ferry operator controlled by MSC Group; Ettore Morace, CEO of Grimaldi Tramed, who has over 40 years of industry experience; Steve Nevey, head of Washington State Ferries, the USA's largest ferry system; and Mark Wilson, who will join the discussion as newly appointed president and CEO of Canada's Northumberland/Bay Ferries.

We will also have two informative and insightful keynotes from Bud Darr and Sotiris Raptis. Darr is executive vice president of maritime policy and government affairs at MSC Group and works with its cargo and passenger divisions, developing and refining the company's central government affairs function. Sotiris is secretary general at the European Community Shipowners' Associations.

A good part of the safety programme will focus on domestic ferry safety

and build on discussions held at the Africa Ferry Safety Seminar hosted by Interferry and International Maritime Organization in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in April 2024. Other discussions will focus on all areas of operational security, including physical security concerns pertaining to ports and ships and increasing cybersecurity risks as technology is moving faster than ever before. The sessions focusing on sustainability will continue to highlight zero-emission solutions and include presentations on sustainable ship construction and interiors.

Building on one of our key initiatives from Interferry's new three-year strategic plan, I want to urge governments and electricity utilities to prioritise investments in onshore power supply (OPS) development to help the ferry sector maintain its lead in maritime electrification and hybridisation. Ferries provide lifeline and essential services to communities across the globe, carrying around 4.3 billion passengers and 373 million vehicles, according to a study

conducted by Oxford Economics on Interferry's behalf.

The relatively short distances covered by ferries warrant battery-electric propulsion. Operating battery-electric vessels also means the ferry industry doesn't have to tap into the limited resources of alternative fuels. However, as long as governments and electricity utilities don't prioritise the strategic rollout of OPS, ferry operators remain in limbo with regard to ordering new fully electric or hybrid ships.

As many governments have implemented, or are in the process of implementing, a carbon tax – for example the European Union's Emissions Trading System – it would only be fair to reinvest a good portion of these revenues in OPS infrastructure. As long as governments are reluctant to put their shoulder to the wheel, it will be almost impossible for the ferry sector to meet ambitious national and global decarbonisation targets, jeopardising the essential lifeline services offered by ferries. **CFR**

Getting it right on the Gibraltar Strait

FRS Iberia Maroc / DFDS's Ronny Moriana Glindemann tells Philippe Holthof how the Strait of Gibraltar ferry operator is becoming a fully integrated member of the ever-growing DFDS family

Danish ferry and logistics powerhouse DFDS completed its \$200 million takeover of FRS Iberia Maroc in January 2024. However, FRS Iberia Maroc's owner had initially planned to forge a strategic partnership with another ferry operator rather than selling the brand that has been operating on the Strait of Gibraltar since 2000.

"It was a very transparent and public process with a mergers and acquisitions boutique," says Ronny Moriana Glindemann, managing director of FRS Iberia Maroc / DFDS. "However, as the candidates were big names, a partnership

can say is that DFDS was not the sole big ferry operator that showed interest."

So, why did FRS Group want to sell a profitable business that operates in a busy market that keeps growing on the back of nearshoring?

"In the wake of Covid-19, the obstruction [container ship] Ever Given caused in the Suez Canal and the Red Sea shipping crisis, production has moved to Morocco, closer to Europe," says Moriana Glindemann. "While cargo volumes spike on account of the nearshoring phenomenon, the Gibraltar Strait passenger market remains rather

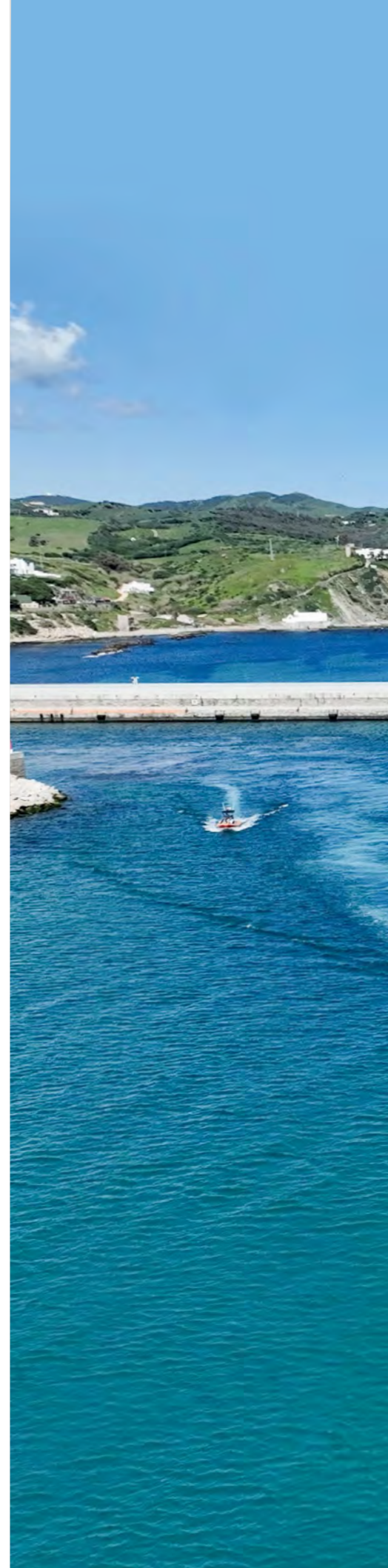


"We have a loyal following with many of our clients making only one return trip per year during the summer months"

was no longer the way forward for our German owners who instead opted to sell their Gibraltar Strait activities."

With Stena Line having recently taken a 49 per cent stake in Africa Morocco Link (AML), a competitor of FRS Iberia Maroc / DFDS, the obvious question is whether the company also made a bid for FRS Iberia Maroc. Moriana Glindemann keeps his cards close to his chest: "All I

stable with 60 per cent of the passengers carried during the three summer months. As is evidenced in other parts of the world, FRS Group first and foremost specialises in passenger-oriented, high-speed ferry operations. This has proved to be a profitable model and, while the freight element is not part of FRS Group's core business, it has been growing significantly in the Strait of





Interferry2024 participants will board FRS Iberia Maroc / DFDS's Tarifa Jet in Tangier and sail to Tarifa, allowing them to take a technical tour of the ferry and both ports



Photo: FRS Iberia Maroc/DFDS

Tanger Express carries more than 900 passengers and 344 vehicles on the Algeciras to Tangier Med route and now features DFDS livery

Gibraltar. Under the wings of DFDS, our ferry operations have become part of the logistics chain and we can now offer door-to-door services from Agadir, Morocco, in the south to Gothenburg, Sweden, in the north.”

While the FRS Iberia Maroc brand name will ultimately be jettisoned, DFDS continues to market its three Gibraltar Strait routes as FRS Iberia Maroc / DFDS. However, several of its ferries have re-emerged from drydocks sporting full DFDS livery rather than FRS Iberia Maroc’s signature red hull and dolphin insignia.

“We have deliberately chosen a phased rebranding approach so that our clients know what they are buying,” explains Moriana Glindemann, elucidating the rationale behind the current dual brand approach. “We have a loyal following

with many of our clients making only one return trip per year during the summer months. These are typically people with Moroccan origins who live in Europe. Having travelled with us for the past two decades or so, they are familiar with the FRS brand but understandably less accustomed to the DFDS brand. We will keep the dual brand names until our clients are fully aware that DFDS’s Gibraltar Strait operations are built on the FRS heritage.”

Moriana Glindemann explains that FRS Iberia Maroc’s red dolphin logo was iconic for many passengers. “When FRS set up shop here in 2000, the red dolphin logo became synonymous with quality and reliability as Tarifa-Tangier Ville was the fastest cross-Gibraltar Strait route, revolutionising the way of sailing between Spain and Morocco,”

he says. “This made our logo a reference for many of our passengers, especially those speaking Arabic only. Twenty-four years on and it still remains a symbol for those who remember how we changed the ferry market in the Strait of Gibraltar. There are people in Morocco who have mixed feelings about the name change and the disappearance of the dolphin logo.”

FRS Iberia Maroc / DFDS is the only ferry company to serve all three main Gibraltar Strait corridors between Spain and Morocco: Algeciras-Tangier Med; Tarifa-Tangier Ville – FRS’s pioneering route which is operated by high-speed craft only; and Algeciras-Ceuta – a so-called cabotage line as Ceuta is a Spanish exclave. In addition, FRS Iberia Maroc / DFDS also calls at Gibraltar every second week.

“We provide the only direct Gibraltar-Tangier Med service,” says Moriana Glindemann. “It’s a kind of public service dedicated to the Moroccan community working in Gibraltar, with Moroccans sailing home for the weekend on Fridays and then back to Gibraltar on Sundays. It’s not a business case as we feel it’s our duty to provide this service given the close ties we keep with Moroccan society. We are part of the country’s maritime cluster as half of our employees are Moroccan. Our Moroccan crews are very skilled and service-minded. About 85 to 90 per cent of our passengers have Moroccan roots so they feel at home from the moment they step aboard.”

“We changed the ferry market in the Strait of Gibraltar”

Gibraltar Strait ferry operations are heavily regulated by the Moroccan authorities. A bilateral agreement between Morocco and Europe states that 50 per cent of the fleet should be Moroccan controlled, albeit not necessarily flagged. “All available tonnage shall be equally divided between Moroccan and European interests,” says Moriana Glindemann. “To guarantee a balance between Moroccan and European-controlled tonnage, Morocco issues licences. This warrants that there is enough capacity during the Operación Paso del Estrecho (or Operation Crossing the Strait), which is probably the world’s biggest ‘migration transit’ within a span of just three months.”

Algeciras-Tangier Med is the main route with four ferry companies – FRS Iberia Maroc / DFDS, AML, Baleària, and Armas Trasmediterránea – collectively operating a total of 12 ferries. Up to 40 departures are offered in either direction on peak summer days but when the ports get congested, authorities implement an interchangeable ticket system so passengers and their cars can board the next available sailing on a first-come, first-served basis.

“Although only applicable for five days per year or so, it’s something truly unique to make sure that despite the congestions in and around the ports, ferries can still operate smoothly,” says Moriana Glindemann. “Moroccan authorities are heavily involved and engaged as it concerns their people. In close cooperation with all involved authorities in Spain and Morocco, our main concern during those peak days is to guarantee a safe and comfortable passage.”

Although all four cross-Gibraltar Strait ferry operators advertise fixed timetables, sailing times can vary as immigration formalities for southbound passengers are completed onboard. “Passengers get their

entry stamp onboard with unloading starting only after all passengers have gone through the process,” explains Moriana Glindemann. “Upon disembarkation all passengers will be subject to inspection of their passports before disembarkation which slows down discharge operations.”

This autumn, the European Union will implement its own entry/exit system, which is reminiscent of the USA’s Electronic System for Travel Authorization. Moriana Glindemann doesn’t expect major disruptions as most of the passengers already have visa formalities in place.

With FRS Iberia Maroc now fully in the hands of DFDS, what’s next for the company? Are there any fleet renewal plans now that the company’s conventional ferries are getting older? And how about hybrid-electric operations given the fairly short distances its ferries cover?

“The primary focus is to become fully integrated, getting all of DFDS’s IT systems up and running,” says Moriana Glindemann. “DFDS is committed to adopting new green technologies, including battery electric or hybrid solutions, but as it stands now,

there are no concrete fleet renewal or retrofit plans as we also depend on the availability of onshore power supply (OPS) infrastructure. OPS facilities are currently not in place yet, although both the ports of Algeciras and Tarifa will invest in OPS for the hotel load of our ships while at berth.”

FRS Iberia Maroc / DFDS is also preparing to host the 48th Annual Interferry Conference in Marrakesh, Morocco, from 26-30 October, marking the first time the event has been held on the African continent. It will join Interferry, a trade association representing the global ferry industry, to welcome stakeholders across the supply chain for conference sessions focused on topics such as zero-emissions solutions, vessel projects, regulatory updates and safety. Participants will also board FRS Iberia Maroc / DFDS’s Tarifa Jet and sail from Tangier to Tarifa, touring the vessel as well as both port terminals.

“Thanks to our close relation with authorities we have huge support from the Moroccan government,” says Moriana Glindemann, who is president of Interferry. “The Transportation Ministry is really supportive and quite involved with high officials from Morocco joining Interferry2024.” **CFR**

DID YOU KNOW?



FRS Iberia Maroc / DFDS operates **three routes** with four high-speed craft, which carry around 2 million passengers, 400,000 cars and 140,000 freight units per year.

A flexible future

Frederic Pouget, Arnaud Le Poulichet and Joëlle Croc of Brittany Ferries explain to Simon Johnson how five new E-Flexer vessels are renewing the operator's fleet

Photo: Brittany Ferries



Brittany Ferries' E-Flexer vessels have been adapted specifically for the brand

Brittany Ferries first announced it had chartered two E-Flexer vessels from ship designer and owner Stena RoRo in 2018. At the time, the move to work alongside Stena and shipbuilder CMI Jinling

new direction was motivated by the potential of the E-Flexer design.

“At the beginning of our process for building the new ships, the main aim was to secure the renewal of our large fleet while having decarbonisation in mind,”



“The main aim was to secure the renewal of our large fleet while having decarbonisation in mind”

Frederic Pouget

represented a significant shift in strategy for the operator, which had previously ordered and owned its own vessels. According to Frederic Pouget, Brittany Ferries' group maritime director, the decision to go in a

says Pouget. “The process of finding a shipyard to meet those aims turned out to be very complex, especially in the European market. When we started to have discussions with Stena, however, we were able to identify a really strong vision

and opportunity through the E-Flexer. The flexibility of the vessel type, from both a technical and commercial point of view, really convinced us.”

Brittany Ferries has taken delivery of three E-Flexers – Galicia, Salamanca and Santana – and has agreements in place for a further two vessels, Guillaume de Normandie and Saint-Malo. While based upon the same basic design platform, each E-Flexer can be adapted to fit the needs of a particular customer. In the case of Brittany Ferries, these adaptations included a significant increase in accommodation to provide capacity for 1,015 passengers and, for all the vessels after Galicia, the additional capability to operate using LNG fuel. Guillaume de Normandie and Saint-Malo will also be equipped with batteries, enabling them to operate under battery power, as well as a further increase to a capacity of 1,300 passengers.



Photo: Klunderbie

Brittany Ferries aims to immerse guests in their destination through the design of its vessels

“The shipbuilding process for each of the vessels has been different,” says Arnaud Le Poulichet, director of engineering and maintenance for Brittany Ferries. “We have always had a very precise view of the ship we would like to create and creating that alongside our partners takes a lot of negotiation and convincing, both externally and internally. We are looking to create something new and technically challenging with each vessel and I think our work and that of our partners has created real success so far.”

The vessels have significant technical advantages over Brittany Ferries’ previous vessels, with the use of LNG as a fuel providing a marked reduction in emissions during their operation. There have also been operational benefits to having a series of broadly identical vessels within the fleet, explains Joëlle Croc, director of customer experience and onboard sales at Brittany Ferries.

“It’s been a huge advantage to have ships which are so similar to one another,” she says. “When we’re training crew in how to operate in all the different areas of the ship, we’re now building knowledge of a common platform. Once



“It’s been a huge advantage to have ships which are so similar to one another”

Joëlle Croc

they’re familiar with that platform, crew members can easily transfer to another ship and quickly become accustomed and operational. That makes it easier to implement operational changes, and it saves time and money in training.”

The similarity of the ships also created a challenge in delivering a unique experience onboard. Brittany Ferries therefore aimed to differentiate the ships by introducing small but significant variations in the design.

“Our first three E-Flexers are like triplets that look like each other, but are dressed differently,” says Croc. “It was a challenge, but also an interesting opportunity. We found that we could adapt the base design quite quickly with the architect and the



The upcoming Guillaume de Normandie will be the fifth E-Flexer to join the fleet

shipyard to create that personality and introduce new concepts.”

The introduction of the new vessels will also signal the end of an era for two of Brittany Ferries’ longest serving vessels, Bretagne and Normandie, as they are set to be replaced by the operator’s fourth and fifth E-Flexers. Brittany Ferries has sensitively negotiated the process of retiring these two well-loved ships by emphasising the promise of the newer vessels.

“Sometimes, people don’t understand why we don’t keep sailing on our old vessels,” says Arnaud. “Everybody knows and likes these ships, which are very iconic for us at Brittany Ferries. We therefore have to bring both passengers and crew with us as we show them that our new vessels and solutions offer an improvement over those older ships.”

Croc adds: “We’re quite unique at Brittany Ferries in having such a strong link between the crew and the ships they sail on. There’s a lot of sadness about Bretagne, our first-ever ship, leaving the fleet after 35 years. So, we have to make sure that our customers and crew are reassured that we will bring them with us on the new ships and expressing how they will be better. It’s about change management.”

However, Brittany Ferries has preserved the legacy of Bretagne and Normandie through the ships’ artwork, with many pieces from their collections being transferred onto the upcoming vessels. Originally commissioned from Scottish

artist Alexander Goudie, the artworks will be featured alongside more contemporary pieces that will immerse passengers in the sights of their destination.

“Artwork plays a big role in our designs, and it’s especially important in maintaining that emotional link,” says Croc. “We are going to move more than 150 artworks onboard for the two new E-Flexers to continue the story after the transition. All the contemporary artists we’ve commissioned works from will also all have a connection to Brittany and Normandy and will create works showcasing the regions. One artist, for example, is collecting pieces of nature

regions the operator visits.

“We are also still working to inject the atmosphere of Brittany and Normandy regions into the interior design of the new vessels in terms of the colours, graphics and products we use,” says Croc. “We want guests to feel and understand their destination, and every part of the design, the music, the art and the food plays a role in that.”

The E-Flexers have therefore allowed Brittany Ferries to renew its fleet in terms of technical capabilities and onboard experience. The flexibility which first convinced the operator to choose the vessels could also provide further value in



“Our job is always to adapt to new regulations and to meet new needs for our customers”

Arnaud Le Poulichet

from the beaches and fields of Brittany and incorporating them into her work.”

The commitment to an immersive guest experience also extends to the wake-up music onboard Brittany Ferries’ vessels, which was commissioned from Galician musician Carlos Nunez to evoke the Celtic musical traditions of the four

the future, suggests Le Poulichet.

“If we need to, we can further adapt the ships again,” he says. “Our job is always to adapt to new regulations and to meet new needs for our customers. We know this means we will have to keep changing for the future, and we are confident in our ability to keep doing so.” **CFR**



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Recovery and renewal

Steve Nevey discusses with Justin Merrigan how Washington State Ferries is proactively addressing issues posed by aging vessels



“We must prioritise recruitment, training and retention of our invaluable staff”

Washington State Ferries (WSF), the largest ferry system in the USA, is a vital lifeline for communities across Puget Sound, connecting 20 terminals and serving nearly 24 million passengers annually. However, as its vessels have spent decades in service, maintaining their reliability and safety has become increasingly critical.

Many of WSF’s vessels were built in the 1960s and 1970s, designed to serve a growing region with its expanding transport needs. They have endured countless crossings and operating hours, and wear and tear caused by maritime conditions. The consequences of aging vessels are multifaceted. Increased maintenance requirements mean more frequent and longer service disruptions, affecting commuters, tourists and freight alike.

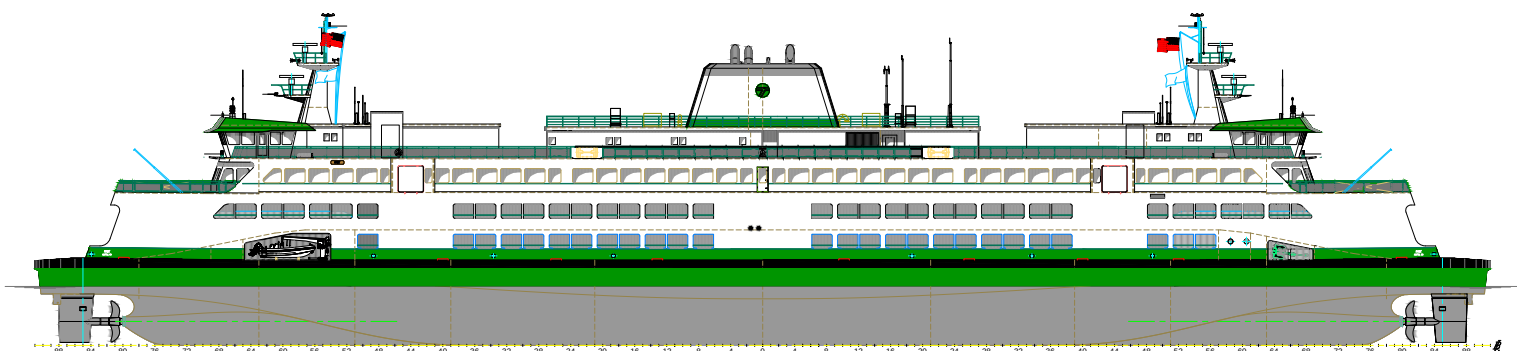
WSF’s assistant secretary and executive director Steve Nevey says that despite these formidable challenges, which were aggravated by the Covid-19 pandemic, the agency is on the road to recovery following several difficult years. WSF has

been proactive in addressing the issues posed by aging vessels. Recognising the need for a modernised fleet, it initiated a vessel replacement programme aimed at retiring older ferries and introducing new and more efficient vessels.

“In May 2024, the System Electrification Program issued the first two volumes of an invitation for bid for up to five new hybrid-electric vessels,” says Nevey. “This launched a rigorous pre-qualification process that ensures shipyards are ready to construct our vessel design on our timeline.

“Later this year, we will release the technical package, allowing the pre-qualified shipyards to submit their bids. We expect the process to conclude in early 2025 when we will award one or two contracts. Selected shipbuilders will need about a year for production planning, and around two years to construct the first vessels. Depending on bid prices, we expect to take delivery of two vessels in 2028, two additional ferries in 2029, and a fifth in 2030.”

A change in state law allowing out-of-state shipyards to submit bids has



A drawing showing WSF’s planned new hybrid-electric ferries



Wenatchee will be WSF's first plug-in ferry when it re-enters service after being converted to hybrid-electric propulsion at Vigor's Harbor Island shipyard in Seattle, Washington

enabled a faster and more competitive procurement process. "We are grateful for the support of the governor's office and the legislature in passing EHB 1846 in 2023, which provides the tools required to acquire the ferries that we need so badly," says Nevey.

"This bill allows for a faster and more competitive process to select shipbuilders, including a nationwide invitation for bid and the potential for WSF to issue up to two contracts at once. These contracting laws only apply to the construction of new hybrid-electric vessels. We believe we have strong competition. More than

10 shipyards around the country have expressed interest. This will help us get the best value for our tax dollars."

In addition to meeting its sustainability and electrification goals, WSF aims to be the ferry system of the future. "We must become an employer of choice," says Nevey. "To meet our staffing demands on the vessels, in the terminals, in the maintenance team, and throughout the organisation we must prioritise recruitment, training and retention of our invaluable staff."

For WSF, success depends on its ability to recruit, train and retain staff and preserve and build vessels to reach

the required 26 ferries to fully operate the system. Currently WSF has staffing and availability for 15 vessels.

"We will support and implement strategic principles to ensure that our culture promotes a diverse, inclusive and equitable work environment for all employees and community partners," says Nevey. "Some examples of initiatives aimed at building our workforce of the future include internal development programmes, external scholarship opportunities, educational collaborations, community engagement and job fairs and a commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging." **CFR**

A crucial role in Croatia

Jadrolinija's David Sopta tells Justin Merrigan how the company's new ferry is helping it to deliver lifeline services for locals and enhance tourism in Croatia

Jadrolinija is a vital part of Croatia's transportation network, connecting the mainland with the nation's multiple islands. In June 2024, the operator introduced its largest-ever vessel, Dalmacija, representing a significant step in enhancing tourism and reinforcing Croatia's status as a premier European destination.

A key factor in Jadrolinija's success is its impressive fleet. To sustain 37 local routes while expanding its international

services, the company has consistently and strategically invested in its development.

David Sopta, president of Jadrolinija's management board, emphasises that to maintain a long-standing tradition while successfully managing a large enterprise, continuous innovation and adaptation are essential.

"Fleet development is our strategy for anticipating market demands and evolving accordingly," he says. "At this moment, our fleet consists of 57 ships

and is one of the largest passenger fleets in the world. In 2023 and 2024 alone, we have added six vessels – two fast ships, one passenger ship, two ferries and, of course, Dalmacija."

Alongside the local routes, which are vital lifelines for the inhabitants of the Croatian islands all year round, Jadrolinija maintains international services connecting Italy and Croatia. Here, Dalmacija offers excellent amenities, including two restaurants,



"A happy passenger is also a happy tourist who will not only return to us, but also to our beautiful country"



Jadrolinija's €18 million ferry Dalmacija is the largest vessel in the company's history and began operating in June 2024

three bars, a grill bar, a children's play area and open decks, making the journey across the Adriatic comfortable and swift.

"Dalmacija, an investment worth €18 million (\$19.8 million), is a direct way of developing our offer on our international routes," says Sopta. "The largest ship in Jadrolinija's history allowed us to change the way we maintain the route and to develop the offer onboard."

"We understand our role in the development of Croatia's tourism sector in general. Jadrolinija transports around 12 million passengers annually, and last year we transported more than 3.5 million vehicles, setting a record. This year has started successfully and we hope to continue setting the growth trends. To do so, we must think of all the aspects of our services. A happy passenger is also a happy tourist who will not only return to us, but also to our beautiful country."

Jadrolinija operates the majority of Croatia's state ship and ferry routes, playing a vital role in the lives of island residents year-round. "Our business is undeniably seasonal, but our commitment to providing high-quality service to islanders and fulfilling our state route contracts positions us as leaders among Adriatic operators," says Sopta.

"We aim to modernise our fleet by retiring older vessels and enhancing service on our most popular routes. Ensuring reliable connectivity is essential for fostering the growth of island communities. Striking a balance between seasonal demand and year-round reliability is key to our success."

With Croatia's tourism industry thriving, Jadrolinija is seizing the opportunity to increase passenger volumes, creating a positive first impression of the country. To meet those passenger needs and capitalise on summer opportunities, the company

has developed seasonal fast ferry routes that allow quicker access to multiple destinations. Optimism is high that 2024 will yield strong results, leading to further increases in passenger and vehicle transport.

Looking ahead, Jadrolinija will prioritise fleet development while emphasising sustainability.

"In recent years, we have engaged in sustainable development projects, continuously exploring innovative solutions for our fleet," says Sopta. "We are in the final stages of procuring three new electric passenger ships, having identified a shipyard for negotiations, and we expect to sign the contract soon."

"This project is crucial for us, and we will approach it with meticulous attention since we lack prior experience with electric vessels. Introducing electric ships will be a ground-breaking achievement, not only for our fleet but also for the entire Mediterranean." **CFR**

Setting sail with safety and satisfaction

Mary Ann Pastrana tells Justin Merrigan about Archipelago Philippine Ferries Corporation's progress towards its ambitious vision of having 30 vessels in operation by 2030

For more than 20 years Archipelago Philippine Ferries Corporation (APFC) has been instrumental in bridging the archipelagic state of the Philippines, which comprises of 7,641 islands. It is a significant challenge, but under its flagship brand FastCat, APFC has built a strong reputation for reliability and innovation in ferry transportation, particularly noteworthy in a country with a history of marine safety concerns.

FastCat is dedicated to ensuring safety, efficiency and customer satisfaction. The company has expanded with a commitment to elevate maritime safety standards in the Philippines, setting a benchmark for other ferry operators. This initiative not only

enhances the overall ferry industry but also improves passenger comfort and convenience during travel.

The initiatives are driven by APFC's chairperson Mary Ann Pastrana, who is also president at the Archipelago Philippine Seafarers Training Institute, a centre focused on educating, training and upskilling seafarers. She also contributes to the advisory councils of the Philippine National Police Maritime Group and the Worldwide Ferry Safety Association.

In addition, FastCat is actively pursuing its ambitious goal of operating 30 vessels by 2030. "As of 2024, the company boasts a fleet of 18 FastCat vessels, underscoring our commitment to expanding services and enhancing maritime transportation across the

Philippines and beyond in Asia," says Pastrana. "The momentum will continue as we increase our vessel count by 2030, thereby bolstering our capacity and service offerings. This expansion will enable us to better meet customer needs, extend our route coverage, and contribute to the overall efficiency and reliability of maritime transport in the region. We remain steadfast in our pursuit of this vision and eagerly anticipate the continued growth and modernisation of our fleet."

According to Pastrana, robust technology investments that enhance safety, cost efficiency and operational effectiveness are central to FastCat's operational success and strategic vision.

"Over the past two decades, the domestic shipping industry in the Philippines has seen significant growth and increased competitiveness," she says. "However, recent research from the Philippine Institute for Development Studies underscores persistent inefficiencies that continue to pose challenges. These inefficiencies manifest in higher shipping costs, subpar service standards, and an alarming frequency of maritime incidents. The Philippine maritime industry stands at a critical juncture, necessitating immediate measures to upgrade, modernise and enhance sustainability and safety across the sector."

Passenger ferry operators in the Philippines and wider Asia face a range of critical challenges and opportunities. "Maintenance is a primary challenge, with operators grappling with limited availability of spare parts and drydock facilities," explains Pastrana. "This





APFC invests in training its FastCat crew members to ensure they can operate vessels safely, deliver good customer service and advance their careers

scarcity often results in prolonged downtime and deferred repairs, heightening the risk of accidents and operational disruptions. Additionally, varying standards among local

efforts to maintain a proficient workforce critical for safe operations,” says Pastrana. “Furthermore, operational challenges include managing overweight cargo and trucks, which can threaten

efficiency and safety,” says Pastrana. “Investments in workforce development and retention programmes could mitigate human capital shortages. Embracing sustainable practices not only aligns



“The Philippine maritime industry stands at a critical juncture, necessitating immediate measures to upgrade, modernise and enhance sustainability and safety”

classification societies pose challenges for inspections and certifications, potentially compromising safety protocols.”

Human capital is a key concern as ferry operators struggle to retain skilled personnel lured by better-paying jobs abroad. “This competition undermines

vessel stability and durability. Strict weight limits enforcement and improved cargo management are essential for safety and longevity.”

Despite these challenges, opportunities for innovation exist. “Technological advancements can boost maintenance

with global environmental goals but also promises long-term cost savings.

“Successfully navigating these challenges and seizing opportunities is crucial for sustainable growth and improved safety in maritime transport across the Philippines and wider Asia.” **CFR**

Leading by example

Mathieu Girardin tells Justin Merrigan about DFDS's plans to invest in new technologies as it journeys towards net zero

D FDS is progressing towards its ambitious goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 and, as it does so, it is evident that the programme signifies more than just a corporate objective. Rather, it embodies the company's deep commitment to environmental stewardship and its aspiration to lead the maritime sector towards cleaner and greener practices.

By combining economic success with environmental responsibility, DFDS aims not only to reduce its impact on the planet but also to contribute positively to a sustainable future for generations to come. The company is making substantial investments in advanced technologies aimed at reducing emissions across its fleet of

vessels. This includes research into alternative fuels such as hydrogen and biofuels, as well as the adoption of more energy-efficient propulsion systems.

According to Mathieu Girardin, executive vice president of DFDS's ferry division, the company is targeting a 45 per cent reduction in tank-to-wake carbon dioxide intensity for its vessels in the short term.

"To propel the green transition forward, DFDS is actively pursuing several initiatives," says Girardin. "By the end of 2030, we aim to have six green ferries operational. We are also continually optimising our vessel operations by adjusting speed, enhancing schedules, reducing turnaround times in terminals under

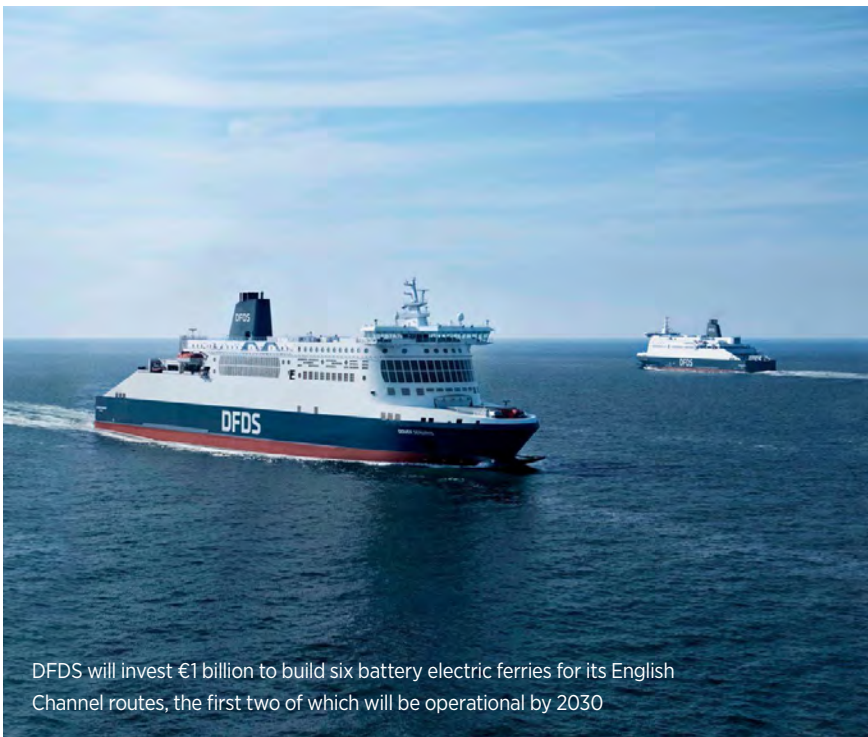
our control, and implementing technical upgrades. Last year, these efforts yielded a notable five per cent reduction in tank-to-wake carbon dioxide emissions intensity across our ferry network.

"As part of our commitment to emissions reduction, we plan to retrofit our vessels by upgrading components such as propellers and bulbs and we're exploring technologies like special antifouling and air lubrication. On land, we're implementing shore power in our ports, electrifying our terminal operations, and deploying electric trucks into the logistics fleet."

DFDS's Vessels of Tomorrow programme is a cornerstone of its newbuilding strategy, aiming to have those six green vessels operational by 2030. This comprises of two methanol-powered, two electric, and two ammonia-fuelled vessels.

"The ammonia-fuelled vessels are slated to operate on a green shipping corridor between Sweden and Belgium that we are establishing with our partners, the Port of Gothenburg, North Sea Port, DFDS and Port of Antwerp-Bruges," says Girardin. "The corridor could potentially become the world's first green ammonia shipping corridor for ro-ro vessels. The two electric vessels will serve routes in the English Channel, while we are still looking into the detailed planning for the methanol vessels."

Looking ahead, DFDS has committed to deploying up to six battery electric vessels on the English Channel by 2035, representing a €1 billion (\$1.1 billion) investment. Girardin says: "We are collaborating with leading experts in battery technology, ship design and energy efficiency to



DFDS will invest €1 billion to build six battery electric ferries for its English Channel routes, the first two of which will be operational by 2030



“By the end of 2030, we aim to have six green ferries operational”

ensure these advanced electric ships prioritise safety and performance while minimising environmental impact during production.”

In addition, DFDS is actively engaging with national authorities, infrastructure partners and energy suppliers on both sides of the English Channel to secure the necessary energy supply and infrastructure for its electric ships. “The green transition requires collaboration,” says Girardin. “Without adequate power supply on land and robust charging infrastructure in ports, operating these ships would not be feasible.”

While DFDS has conducted a feasibility study on hydrogen

propulsion with H2 Energy, the company is not planning to use hydrogen as a fuel in the very near future. “Hydrogen is promising, and we are evaluating it as a potential future fuel source,” says Girardin. “The project demonstrated that retrofitting Magnolia Seaways with a hydrogen-fuelled propulsion system is technically feasible and commercially viable. However, establishing a cost-effective and scalable hydrogen ecosystem requires comprehensive energy infrastructure and policy support.”

Through innovation, collaboration and strategic investments, DFDS is paving the way for a cleaner and more sustainable future in maritime transport. **CFR**



Making ferries more affordable

Developing a series of ships with a design that can be easily adapted to suit the specific needs of individual operators could help to reduce the costs and complexities of building ferries



MICHAEL GREY

Michael Grey is a master mariner turned maritime journalist and has edited both *Fairplay* and *Lloyd's List* in a career spanning more than 60 years.

Why is it not possible to build a 'standard' ferry – a design that could be built in series, thus resolving all the problems and expenses caused by unique, one-off designs that give endless trouble to struggling shipyards? The obvious answer is that ferry routes are so very different, as are the requirements of the operators. Distance, separate needs for passengers and freight, sea states and weather and different terminal designs all tend to demand a degree of dedication if a ship is to provide the optimum transport solution. Ferries can be converted for different purposes, but the tendency until recently was to expect designers and shipyards to build new ships for dedicated services. The alternative – buying something on the

second-hand market – might involve a certain degree of risk.

The result has been far more expensive ships and more complexity in the construction process, which offers at least some explanation as to why European shipyards have found it hard to compete with those who can build vessels cheaper. It also has not helped that the ferry world has remained somewhat fragmented, compared to the deep-sea liner sector, with limited consolidation taking place.

However, the emergence of some sizeable operations is changing the ability of ferry operators to order series of ships, allowing them to build longer relationships with shipbuilders and designers and benefit from all the efficiencies this can bring. And a basic



Stena RoRo and CMI Jinling Weihai shipyard are building 15 E-Flexer ro-pax ferries, all with the same base design that has been adapted for individual vessels operated by six different ferry brands. They include Brittany Ferries' Galicia, Attica Group's as-yet unnamed newbuild, Marine Atlantic's Ala'suinu, and Stena Line's Stena Estrid



ferry design, ordered in series at a good price, can be adapted to cope with the demands of different routes, and the needs of charterers. The charter market is a golden opportunity for those with adaptable ships.

When working with a ship series, shipyards can easily vary the interior fit-out of individual vessels to incorporate different passenger requirements, such as

development moving fast, in parallel with designs for hybrid machinery and different fuels.

Could ferry operators cooperate more to source the replacement ships they need, at a better price than they might have obtained by "going it alone"? We may be seeing the beginnings of such a development, which could make some sense, if one considers the

considered as an example where there could be scope for cooperation in a procurement programme. It has been suggested that the present and future needs of the Scottish island ferry services could also offer an opportunity for a properly funded and long-term dedicated shipbuilding programme, rather than a piecemeal process.

The early days of freight ro-ro design saw some notable examples of series building, which resulted in highly successful ships, many of which were built specifically for charter. Half a century on, in an ideal world, the fleet replacement requirements of ferry operators would be in harmony with the ability of builders to supply these needs, so the price volatility that comes with wildly fluctuating demand can possibly be damped down over time. Real-world experience suggests this is unlikely to happen, which is a pity in an era full of technical and regulatory demands that will inevitably make ferry construction, and the operation of these important ships, more expensive. **CFR**

"A basic ferry design, ordered in series at a good price, can be adapted to cope with different routes"

overnight accommodation or fittings for terminal ramps, without unduly making them more expensive. The future needs of operators for different fuel options can also be accommodated more easily at the building stage, rather than in subsequent retrofitting. This is now important, with operators all weighing up the options for greater sustainability and anticipating regulatory changes, and with battery

difficulties some operators are facing when it comes to affording their replacement programmes.

Good design might surely evolve along with ferries that were suitable for a wide range of routes. Those across the New Zealand Cook Straits or the North West American coastal services – two areas where there is an urgent need for replacement tonnage – might be

Innovative and sustainable

Justin Merrigan looks at the latest newbuild orders and deliveries in the global ferry industry

The recent surge in new ferry orders shows no signs of slowing down, with the latest contracts for two additional Stena RoRo E-Flexer vessels from China's CMI Jinling (Weihai) shipyard. Scheduled for delivery to Attica Group in 2027, these ships will operate in the Adriatic Sea under long-term charters, with options to purchase and to acquire two more vessels.

Speaking about the order, Attica Group CEO Panos Dikaïos emphasised the company's commitment to innovation over the past three decades through the design and construction

of new vessels. "The Superfast series transformed the Adriatic ferry market in terms of quality and speed, while the sister ships, Blue Star Patmos and Blue Star Delos, greatly enhanced the travel experience on Aegean Sea routes," he says. "Our latest additions, the three state-of-the-art Aero Highspeed ferries, have already made a significant impact on visitor numbers to the Saronic Islands.

"Our agreement with Stena RoRo for these two advanced vessels sets new benchmarks for the Greek ferry industry. It significantly reduces our environmental impact, elevates the travel

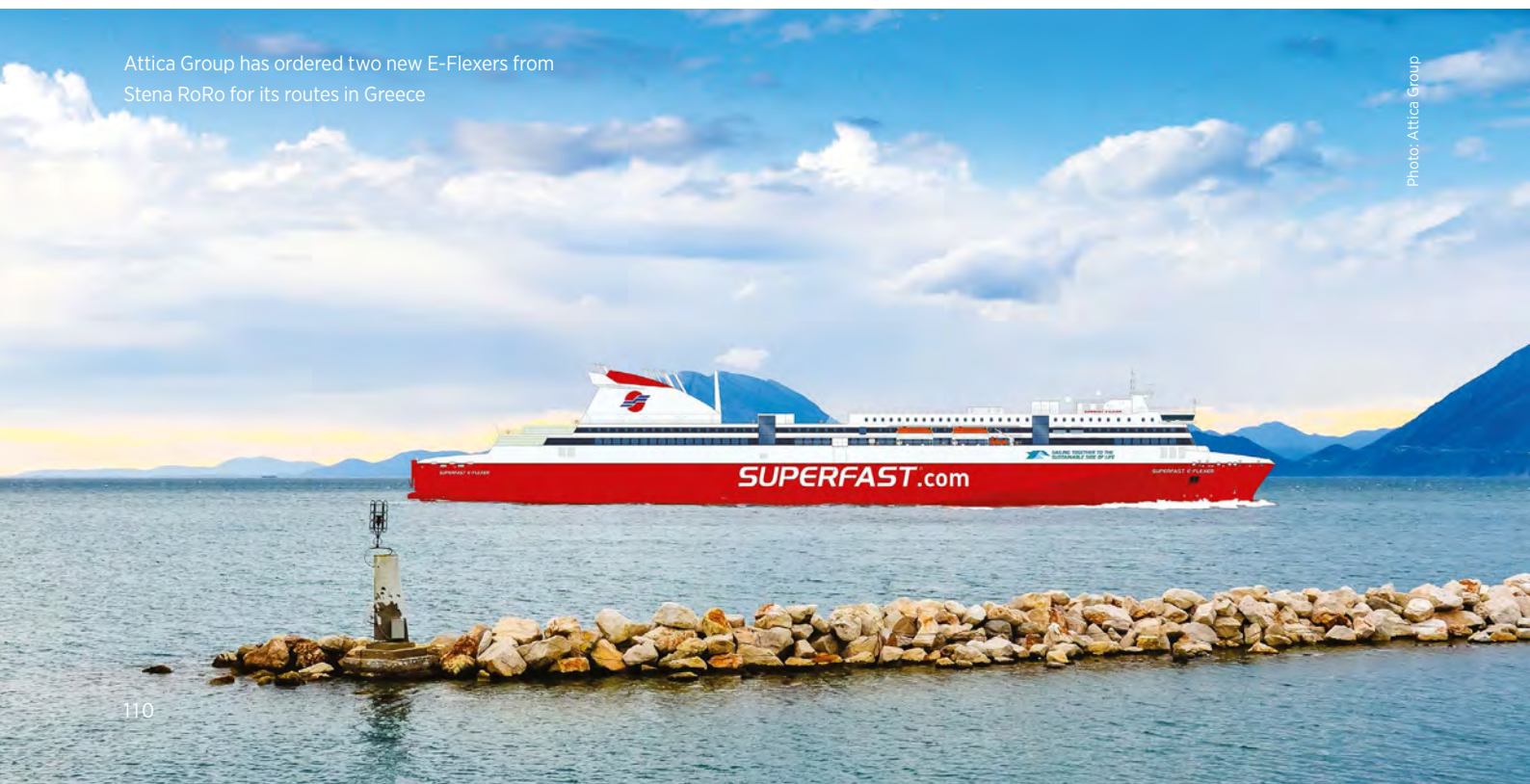
experience, and effectively addresses future challenges."

These vessels are the fourteenth and fifteenth in Stena RoRo's E-Flexer series, which represent a significant evolution in ferry transportation. Tailored for diverse European routes, the vessels' flexible design can be adapted to specific operational needs and accommodate growing passenger demand while providing ample cargo space, a crucial advantage for operators facing fluctuating market conditions.

Another Stena RoRo E-Flexer, Ala'suinu, made its debut in the Marine

Attica Group has ordered two new E-Flexers from Stena RoRo for its routes in Greece

Photo: Attica Group



Notable ferry orders up to 2027

Operator	Vessel	Yard	Pax	Delivery estimate
TT-Line Company	Spirit of Tasmania IV	Rauma Marine Constructions	1,200	2024
GNV	GNV Polaris	Guangzhou Shipyard International	1,785	2024
CMAL	Isle of Islay	Cemre Shipyard, Yalova	450	2024
TT-Line Company	Spirit of Tasmania V	Rauma Marine Constructions	1,200	2025
GNV	GNV Orion	Guangzhou Shipyard International	1,785	2025
Brittany Ferries	Guillaume de Normandie	CMI Jinling Weihai	1,400	2025
Brittany Ferries	Saint-Malo	CMI Jinling Weihai	1,400	2025
CMAL	Loch Indaal	Cemre Shipyard, Yalova	450	2025
CMAL	Claymore	Cemre Shipyard, Yalova	450	2025
CMAL	Lochmor	Cemre Shipyard, Yalova	450	2025
Buquebús	China Zorilla	Incat Tasmania, Hobart	1,200	2025
Torghatten Nord	2 ro-pax	Cemre Shipyard, Yalova	599	2025
Corsica Linea	1 ro-pax	CMI Jinling Weihai	1,000	2026
GNV	GNV Virgo	Guangzhou Shipyard International	1,785	2026
GNV	TBC	Guangzhou Shipyard International	1,785	2026
La Méridionale	2 ro-pax	CMI Jinling Weihai	1,000	2027
Norled	3 ro-pax	Havyard shipyard	250	2027
Attica Group	2 E-Flexer ro-pax	CMI Jinling Weihai	1,500	2027
BC Ferries	4 double-ended ro-pax	Damen Shipyards Galati	390	2027

Atlantic fleet on the route between North Sydney and Argentia in Canada in July 2024. Onboard there is space for 1,000 passengers and 146 cabins in two- and four-berth layouts, with accessible three-bed options available. The vehicle decks span a total of 2,571 lane metres, including 476 lane metres for cars. Ala'suinu has been chartered from Stena for five years and Marine Atlantic has the option to purchase it after the contract expires.

Also in July, Damen Shipyards Galati in Romania cut the steel for the first two of four electric Island-class vessels for Canada's BC Ferries. These vessels will mark the first fully electric additions to the company's fleet.

Powered by battery packs capable of supplying 2,000 kilowatts per hour, each ferry will accommodate up to 47 vehicles and 390 passengers. Based on Damen's double-ended RoRo 8113 E3 model, the ferries feature the E3 label, which signifies a commitment to environmental sustainability, operational efficiency and economic viability. These new ferries are set to operate routes connecting Nanaimo with Gabriola Island and Campbell River with Quadra Island, with an anticipated launch date in 2027.

In May, Washington State Ferries (WSF) invited shipyards across the USA to bid on the construction of five new hybrid-electric ferries. The contract is anticipated to be awarded to one or possibly two shipbuilders by early 2025, with delivery of the initial two vessels scheduled for 2028. WSF has enlisted ABB to aid in its quest for zero emissions by 2050. ABB will oversee the design and construction of the vessels, each capable of carrying 160 vehicles. In addition, ABB will play a critical role in training WSF's crews on the operation and maintenance of the hybrid systems.

Meanwhile, Artemis Technologies has partnered with Red Funnel to introduce the Artemis EF-24 fully electric, zero-emissions foiling passenger ferry on the Solent route between Southampton in England and the Isle of Wight in late 2025. The craft is expected to save up to 3,700 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent annually, with savings increasing to approximately 4,150 tonnes when powered by renewable electricity.

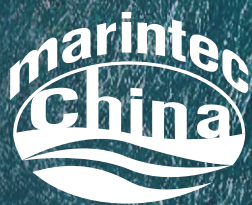
The Artemis EF-24 will feature advanced hydrofoil propulsion, which lifts the vessel out of the water for reduced drag, resulting in a smoother, quieter ride for passengers. This initiative

marks a significant advancement in the decarbonisation of the ferry industry, as Red Funnel joins two other operators in adopting this advanced technology.

Red Funnel CEO Fran Collins says the company has been working with Artemis for several months to develop this partnership. "We are delighted to reach this exciting milestone as part of our journey to decarbonise our fleet. Delivering first-class service to our customers is our priority and the Artemis EF-24 passenger ferry will provide speed, comfort and reliability as well as significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution."

Transport Scotland has unveiled plans to procure seven new electric ferries aimed at bolstering the resilience of Scotland's Clyde and Hebrides ferry network while supporting island communities. The initial phase of the competitive tender process will evaluate whether interested shipyards meet the necessary financial and technical requirements to undertake the project. Phase one of the Small Vessels Replacement Programme is projected to cost approximately £175 million (\$201 million). This budget will cover the construction of the seven new vessels, as well as enhancements to ports and

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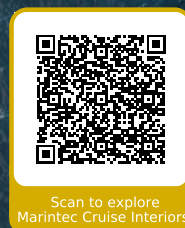
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Photo: Rauma Marine Constructions

Rauma Marine Constructions floated Spirit of Tasmania V out of the dry dock at its yard in Finland in July and is now completing interior outfitting work

upgrades to shore power infrastructure. The tender invitation for this contract is anticipated to be issued around September 2024, with the contract expected to be awarded by March 2025.

In China, Guangzhou Shipyard International (GSI) launched the second of four ro-pax vessels currently being constructed at its yard for GNV. During the event this July, GNV revealed it would name the newbuild GNV Orion, which is scheduled for delivery in summer 2025 and measures 218 metres in length and 29.6 metres in beam. It will have a maximum speed of 25 knots, offer 433 cabins, have 3,100 lane metres for vehicles and accommodate 1,785 passengers.

GSI is set to deliver the first vessel, GNV Polaris, by the end of 2024. It has also laid the keel for the third ferry, GNV Virgo, which will be powered by LNG and is expected to be complete in 2026, along with an unnamed fourth LNG-powered unit.

Australia's TT-Line Company is set to take delivery of the first of the two

new Spirit of Tasmania ferries from Rauma Marine Constructions (RMC) in the third quarter of 2024. Spirit of Tasmania IV underwent sea trials in June, completing a five-day run from RMC's yard in Finland. During the trial, the vessel underwent rigorous testing to evaluate its performance, including speed and manoeuvrability. Engineering teams also carried out thorough assessments of key systems, such as safety and emergency protocols.

"The ship excelled in every aspect, and we're thrilled to see it sailing for the first time," says Bernard Dwyer, CEO and managing director of Spirit of Tasmania.

RMC floated out the second ferry, Spirit of Tasmania V, in July. Each of the newbuilds will be powered by four Wartsila nine-cylinder turbocharge dual fuel LNG and diesel engines. Measuring over 212 metres, they will each accommodate up to 1,800 passengers, featuring 12 deluxe cabins, two family suites, 120 outside cabins, 159 inside cabins and eight accessible cabins with

an interconnecting cabin. They are the first purpose-built newbuilds for Spirit of Tasmania's operation on the Bass Strait between Australia and Tasmania.

Polverferries has taken delivery of its largest and longest ferry, Varsovia, marking the company's first new vessel in over 20 years. Built by Italy's Visentini shipyard and entering service at the end of July, the ship is set to significantly enhance connectivity between Poland and Sweden, making travel easier for both passengers and businesses.

Designed with spacious lounges, restaurants and comfortable cabins, Varsovia aims to provide an "exceptional experience" for tourists and commercial traffic alike. At 216 metres long, it will have capacity for 920 passengers, 200 cabins and space for 200 cars and 150 trucks. The ferry will help reduce travel times and increase capacity on the popular route between Świnoujście in Poland and Ystad in Sweden, addressing the growing demand for ferry services in the region. [CFR](#)

Small luxuries

The second half of 2024 is set to see a series of small and luxurious vessels make their debuts, before Disney's upcoming sixth ship closes out the year. Alex Smith reports

While the beginning of 2024 saw a series of major additions to the fleets of Royal Caribbean International, Princess Cruises, Cunard and TUI Cruises, the order book for the rest of the year is filled with several smaller vessels that will bring new experiences to both the luxury and river cruise markets.

Among the new additions will be Explora Journeys' Explora II, the second

ship to join the cruise brand's fleet. The 14-deck vessel will be largely identical to the first Explora ship, though the cruise line has increased its use of lighting solutions from Flos and introduced bespoke Davos outdoor furniture from interior designer Matteo Nunziati in the Helios Pool & Bar area. It will set sail from Civitavecchia, Italy, on 16 September following its delivery by Fincantieri. A third Explora ship is set to be delivered by

the Italian shipbuilder in 2026, followed by a fourth and fifth in 2027 and 2028.

Viking Cruises, meanwhile, will be adding two newbuilds to its fleet of Nile River ships – Viking Hathor and Viking Sobek. The 82-guest vessels, named after ancient Egyptian gods, are both under construction at the Massara shipyard in Cairo, Egypt. Viking Hathor will begin sailing in August, while Viking Sobek will follow in the autumn. Alongside its



Photo: Disney Cruise Line

Disney Treasure will be the second Wish-class ship constructed by Meyer Werft for Disney Cruise Line

Notable cruise orders up to 2036

Operator	Vessel	Yard	Pax	Delivery estimate
Explora Journeys	Explora II	Fincantieri	900	Q3 2024
Viking	Viking Sobek	Massara Shipyard	82	Q4 2024
Viva Cruises	Viva Enjoy	Vahali Shipyards	190	Q4 2024
Disney Cruise Line	Disney Treasure	Meyer Werft	4,000	Q4 2024
Viking	Viking Vela	Fincantieri	998	Q4 2024
AmaWaterways	AmaMagdalena	-	60	Q1 2025
TUI Cruises	Mein Schiff Relax	Fincantieri	3,984	Q1 2025
Norwegian Cruise Line	Norwegian Aqua	Fincantieri	3,550	Q2 2025
TUI River Cruises	TUI Alma	West Sea Viana	123	Q2 2025
AmaWaterways	AmaSintra	West Sea Viana	102	Q2 2025
MSC Cruises	MSC World America	Chantiers de l'Atlantique	6,762	Q2 2025
Oceania Cruises	Allura	Fincantieri	1,200	Q2 2025
AmaWaterways	AmaMelodia	-	64	Q2 2025
Royal Caribbean International	Star of the Seas	Meyer Turku	5,600	Q2 2025
Asuka Cruises	Asuka III	Meyer Werft	744	Q2 2025
Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection	Luminara	Chantiers de l'Atlantique	452	Q3 2025
Saga Cruises	Spirit of the Moselle	Vahali	182	Q3 2025
Viking	Viking Vesta	Fincantieri	998	Q3 2025
Princess Cruises	Star Princess	Fincantieri	4,300	Q3 2025
Viking	Viking Tonle	Hai Minh Shipyard	80	Q3 2025
Disney Cruise Line	Disney Destiny	Meyer Werft	4,000	Q3 2025
Celebrity Cruises	Celebrity Xcel	Chantiers de l'Atlantique	3,260	Q4 2025
Four Seasons Yachts	Unnamed	Fincantieri, Trieste	190	Q4 2025
Windstar Cruises	Star Seeker	West Sea Viana	224	Q4 2025
SunStone Maritime Group	Douglas Mawson	China Merchants International Holdings	186	Q4 2025
Disney Cruise Line	Disney Adventure	Meyer Wismar	6,000	2025
Viking	Viking Longships 56-60	Neptun Werft	168	2025
Emerald Cruises	Emerald Kaia	Halong Shipbuilding Company	128	Q1 2026
TUI Cruises	InTuition-class 2	Fincantieri	4,100	Q1 2026
Royal Caribbean Cruise Line	Icon-class 3	Meyer Turku	7,600	Q2 2026
Viking	Viking Ocean newbuild XIII	Fincantieri	930	Q2 2026
Explora Journeys	Explora III	Fincantieri	900	Q2 2026
Adora Cruises	H1509	Shanghai Waigaoqiao Shipbuilding	4,288	Q4 2026
Antarctica21	Magellan Discoverer	Asenav Shipyard	76	Q4 2026
Viking	Viking Longships 61-65	Neptun Werft	168	2026
Norwegian Cruise Line	Prima Plus-class 2	Fincantieri	3,550	2026
MSC Cruises	MSC World Asia	Chantiers de l'Atlantique	6,762	2026
Regent Seven Seas Cruises	Seven Seas Prestige	Fincantieri	850	2026
Four Seasons Yachts	Unnamed	Fincantieri	190	2026
Orient Express	Orient Express Corinthian	Chantiers de l'Atlantique	120	2026
Project Sama	Unnamed	T. Mariotti	100	2026
Explora Journeys	Explora IV	Fincantieri	922	Q1 2027
Viking	Viking Ocean newbuild XIV	Fincantieri	998	Q2 2027
Norwegian Cruise Line	Prima Plus-class 3	Fincantieri	3,550+	2027
Oceania Cruises	Unnamed	Fincantieri	1,450	2027
Storylines	Narrative	Brodosplit	1,000	2027
Explora Journeys	Explora V	Fincantieri	922	2027
Carnival Cruise Line	Excel-class 4	Meyer Werft	6,400	2027
Ryobi Holdings	Unnamed	West Sea Viana	150	2027

CRUISE ORDER BOOK

> Notable cruise orders up to 2036 cont.

Operator	Vessel	Yard	Pax	Delivery estimate
MSC Cruises	World-class 4	Chantiers de l'Atlantique	5,400	2027
Crystal Cruises	Unnamed	Fincantieri	690	Q2 2028
Viking	Viking Ocean newbuild XV	Fincantieri	998	Q2 2028
Viking	Viking Ocean newbuild XVI	Fincantieri	998	Q4 2028
Carnival Cruise Line	Excel-class 5	Meyer Werft	6,400	2028
Royal Caribbean International	Oasis-class 7	Chantiers de l'Atlantique	5,668	2028
Norwegian Cruise Line	Prima Plus-class 4	Fincantieri	3,550+	2028
Explora Journeys	Explora VI	Fincantieri	922	2028
Viking	Viking Ocean newbuild XVII	Fincantieri	998	Q2 2029
Carnival Cruise Line	Unnamed	Fincantieri	8,000	Q2 2029
Viking	Viking Ocean newbuild XVIII	Fincantieri	998	Q4 2029
Regent Seven Seas Cruises	Unnamed	Fincantieri	850	2029
Oceania Cruises	Unnamed	Fincantieri	1,450	2029
Viking	Viking Ocean newbuild XIX	Fincantieri	998	Q2 2030
Viking	Viking Ocean newbuild XX	Fincantieri	998	Q4 2030
Norwegian Cruise Line	Unnamed	Fincantieri	5,000	2030
Disney Cruise Line	Disney newbuilds 9-13	Meyer Werft	-	2027-2031
Carnival Cruise Line	Unnamed	Fincantieri	8,000	2031
Norwegian Cruise Line	Unnamed	Fincantieri	5,000	2032
Carnival Cruise Line	Unnamed	Fincantieri	8,000	2033
Norwegian Cruise Line	Unnamed	Fincantieri	5,000	2034
Norwegian Cruise Line	Unnamed	Fincantieri	5,000	2036

new vessels in Egypt, Viking Cruises' European river cruise fleet is set to grow further in 2025, with five ships set for delivery across next year and a further five throughout 2026.

The cruise line will also continue to expand its ocean fleet with the introduction of Viking Vela in December 2024. Built by Fincantieri, the ship will be longer and wider than its 10 predecessors due to the introduction of new stability regulations by the International Maritime Organization. The updated design will also increase the ship's capacity to 998 passengers. Viking has nine further ocean ships planned in the coming years, all of which will be identical to Viking Vela.

"Together with Fincantieri, we have built the world's most elegant ocean

vessels, and it is always a proud day when our newest ship meets water for the first time," says Torstein Hagen, chairman of Viking Cruises. "We look forward to welcoming Viking

"Together with Fincantieri, we have built the world's most elegant ocean vessels"

Vela to our award-winning fleet and introducing even more curious travellers to the Viking way of exploration."

Returning to the river, Viva Cruises will add a third newbuild to its fleet with the debut of Viva Enjoy in September 2024. Built at Vahali Zasavica shipyards in Serbia, the vessel will feature 95

cabins with capacity for 190 passengers. Other onboard amenities include three restaurants, an open-plan lounge, a sun deck and a fitness and wellness area.

The largest ship still yet to debut in

2024 is Disney Treasure, which is set to begin sailing in the Caribbean on 21 December. Disney Treasure is the second of Disney Cruise Line's Wish-class vessels to be built by Meyer Werft and has been designed by Walt Disney Imagineering around the theme of adventure. The 4,000-passenger ship will be the first

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CRUISESHIPS
 Navantia



Photo: Viking Cruises

Viking Cruises upcoming Nile River cruise ship, Viking Hathor, was floated out at the Massara shipyard in Cairo in March

in the fleet to feature venues inspired by Disney's theme parks, including the Tomorrow Tower Suite, which will be situated in the ship's forward funnel and accessible by a private elevator. Other highlights will include an adult lounge themed around the 1970 film *The Aristocats*, a dining and entertainment venue inspired by the Pixar film *Coco*, and a sweet shop reminiscent of the ice cream parlour in Disney's *Zootopia*.

"Disney Treasure will bring brand-new stories to life, blending one-of-a-kind experiences with the extraordinary entertainment, world-class dining and unparalleled hospitality that make every sailing so memorable," says Sharon Siskie, senior vice president and general manager of Disney Cruise Line. "As we chart a course for adventure, we're so excited for families to discover the excitement and exploration that awaits onboard the sixth ship in the Disney Cruise Line fleet."

Moving into the start of 2025, TUI Cruises is set to introduce Mein Schiff

Relax, the first of the cruise line's new InTuition-class ships. Currently under construction at Fincantieri's Monfalcone shipyard, Mein Schiff Relax will be the first TUI Cruises ship to operate using LNG fuel and will also be capable of sailing using biofuel and e-LNG fuel if they become widely available. The ship is also being equipped with a combined exhaust gas treatment system consisting of an exhaust gas scrubber and catalysts, which will reduce sulphur emissions by up to 99 per cent, nitrogen oxide emissions by up to 75 per cent and particulate emissions by up to 60 per cent. The focus on sustainable technology in the new class is part of TUI's goal to offer its first climate-neutral cruises by 2030.

"Guests can discover this new class of ship, which has tried and tested features on every deck and in every area," says Wybcke Meier, CEO of TUI Cruises. "But intuitively exploring this ship also offers guests a completely new perspective, providing the opportunity to

find their favourite place with more space and options."

TUI River Cruises is also expanding its fleet in 2025 with its first ever newbuild, TUI Alma. Designed to sail on Portugal's Douro River and built by the Portuguese West Sea Viana shipyard, the ship will have four decks, 62 cabins and accommodate up to 123 guests onboard. The top deck will feature a shallow pool with seating areas, sun loungers, a bar and food service, while other dining venues will include a main restaurant and a Portuguese-inspired al fresco dining space.

"This is a huge moment for TUI River Cruises and a defining moment in our journey," says Chris Logan, managing director of specialist business at TUI River Cruises. "Given we only launched back in 2021 it's a testament to the response of our customers that we're able to deliver a newbuild ship. We're so excited to create something amazing for our guests." **CFR**

A refurbishment renaissance

Cruise and ferry operators continue to make safety, energy efficiency and aesthetic upgrades to their ships. Laura Hyde spotlights selected projects completed so far in 2024

There are over 300 expedition, ocean and river cruise ships and hundreds of ferries currently in service. All these vessels must enter dry dock at regular intervals for general maintenance, inspections and technical upgrades, as well as retrofitting projects as more energy-efficient engines and new technologies come to the market. Operators must also be conscious of ensuring a ship's interiors remain

aesthetically appealing to today's passengers to compete with the many newbuild ships coming into service.

As such, repair and refurbishment yards across the globe have been a hive of activity in the first half of 2024.

Grand Bahama Shipyard, Freeport, The Bahamas

The Grand Bahama Shipyard has dry docks that can accommodate vessels up

to 300 metres in length. In late 2023, the shipyard commissioned the construction of two floating docks, which it hopes to have operational by 2026.

In the first half of 2024 the shipyard completed numerous cruise ship refurbishment projects, including a month-long dry dock for Royal Caribbean International's *Grandeur of the Seas*. The team refreshed cabins and carried out scheduled maintenance and technical upgrades on the 28-year-old ship. In another notable project, the shipyard repaired Carnival Cruise Line's *Carnival Freedom* in March following a fire in its funnel.

Fayard, Munkebo, Denmark

Catering to passenger vessels since 1916, Fayard has four large graving dry docks and plenty of berth, as well as a safe anchorage area close to the Fayard workshops. All dry docks and berths are well covered with cranes which offer a lifting capacity of up to 1,200 tonnes. The largest dry dock is 415 metres long by 90 metres wide.

The shipyard dry docks more than 130 vessels per year and so far in 2024 has completed projects onboard numerous ships, including Lindblad Expeditions' expedition vessels *National Geographic Endurance* and *National Geographic Resolution*, as well as Fjord Line's ferries *Stavangerfjord* and *Fjord*



Photo: Grand Bahama shipyard

Royal Caribbean International's *Grandeur of the Seas* spent time in dry dock at Grand Bahama shipyard in the first half of 2024

FSTR, Irish Ferries' Isle of Inisheer, Scandlines' ferry Berlin, and Color Line Marine's Color Fantasy.

Chantier Naval de Marseille, France

The Port of Marseille's shipyard has three dry docks, including its 465-metre long, 85-metre-wide dry dock, which is the largest in the Mediterranean.

In March the shipyard completed a refurbishment project onboard Celebrity Cruises' ship *Celebrity Infinity*. The ship was upgraded to include new aft Sunset Suites featuring large private balconies designed to enable passengers to watch sunsets. The Retreat Lounge (formerly Michael's Club) was also redecorated with a new colour palette, while private restaurant Luminae at The Retreat was expanded.

At the end of April, Carnival Cruise Line's *Carnival Legend* arrived for a month-long drydock. The yard completed general maintenance and routine repairs, and also renovated public spaces. New additions to the ship included the Heroes Tribute Bar & Lounge; Chef's Table; and a mini golf course located on the first deck.

Fincantieri, Italy

Fincantieri Services oversees maintenance and repair projects for several cruise vessels in its shipyards, maintaining a steady workload this year.

So far in 2024, Fincantieri has completed dry dock for Oceania Cruises' *Marina* and Silversea's *Silver Whisper* at its Palermo and Trieste shipyards, respectively. It has seven major projects planned for the second half of 2024.

Fincantieri has also been expanding its services globally, including in the USA through Fincantieri Services USA. In addition, it is focusing on green technologies, installing high-voltage shore power connection systems, and ensuring Americans with Disabilities Act compliance in cabins.

Damen Shiprepair Rotterdam, Netherlands

Established in 1957, the shipyard in Rotterdam is one of the largest in



Photo: Damen Shiprepair

Work has been carried out at Damen Shiprepair Rotterdam on Stena Line's *Stena Britannica* and *Stena Hollandica* (above), on Oceania Cruises' *Marina* at Fincantieri (middle) and on Fjord Line's ferries *Stavangerfjord* and *Fjord FSTR* at Fayard shipyard (top) so far in 2024

Western Europe with a dry dock that's 405 metres long by 90 metres wide.

Stena Line's Stena Britannica and Stena Hollandica both spent 18 days in dry dock at Damen Shiprepair in Rotterdam in early 2024. They were updated with new restaurants and bars, modern and rearranged seating areas, which increased passenger capacity.

To remove the old paint, each ship's underwater hull was hydro-blasted, a technique which is not only a sustainable alternative to grit or sand blasting, but also more efficient, allowing the shipyard to complete the project in a short time frame. The ships were then repainted with sustainable coatings. Stena Hollandica was painted with X-GIT Low Friction from GIT Coatings, while Stena Britannica was repainted using silicon, which contains no biocides. Both marine coatings have been designed to reduce fuel consumption and emissions. Each vessel's propellers were also polished to help reduce friction in the water.

Metalships & Docks, Vigo, Spain

Spanish company Metalships & Docks was founded in 1975 and is devoted to shipbuilding and ship repairs. The ship repair division has been working continually for over 30 years, carrying out both planned and emergency repairs and upgrades on a wide range of vessels.

Metalships recently carried out several steel jobs onboard Quark Expeditions' Ocean Explorer while the ship was in a month-long dry dock. In April, Adventure Canada's Ocean Endeavour underwent several repair jobs on its stabilisers and freshwater tanks. The ship repair team also carried out several steel works, painted and treated the hull topsides and repaired several valves.

Navantia, Cadiz, Spain

Navantia boasts seven dry docks with lengths between 58 and 386 metres, the largest of which is 66 metres wide and has 440,000 deadweight tonnage capacity. The company is continuing to grow in the cruise ship repair market, reporting that it has repaired more cruise

As good as new

A map of the world's leading passenger ship repair and refurbishment facilities

North America

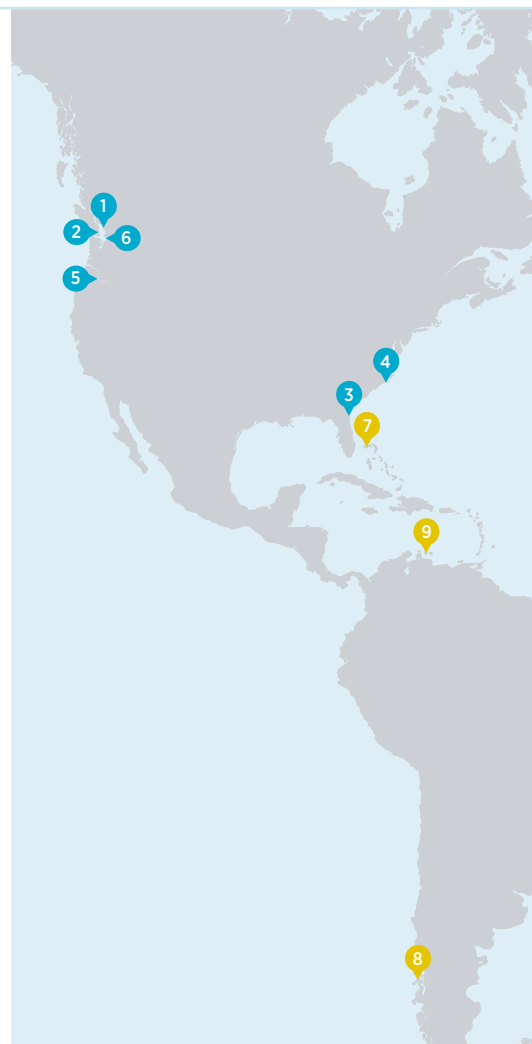
- 1 Seaspan Vancouver Drydock, Canada
- 2 Seaspan Victoria Shipyards, Canada
- 3 BAE Systems Jacksonville Ship Repair, USA
- 4 Detyens Shipyards, Charleston, USA
- 5 Vigor Portland Drydocks, USA
- 6 Vigor Seattle Drydocks, USA

Caribbean and South America

- 7 Grand Bahama Shipyard, Freeport, The Bahamas
- 8 Asenav, Valdivia, Chile
- 9 Damen Shiprepair, Willemstad, Curaçao

Europe and the Mediterranean

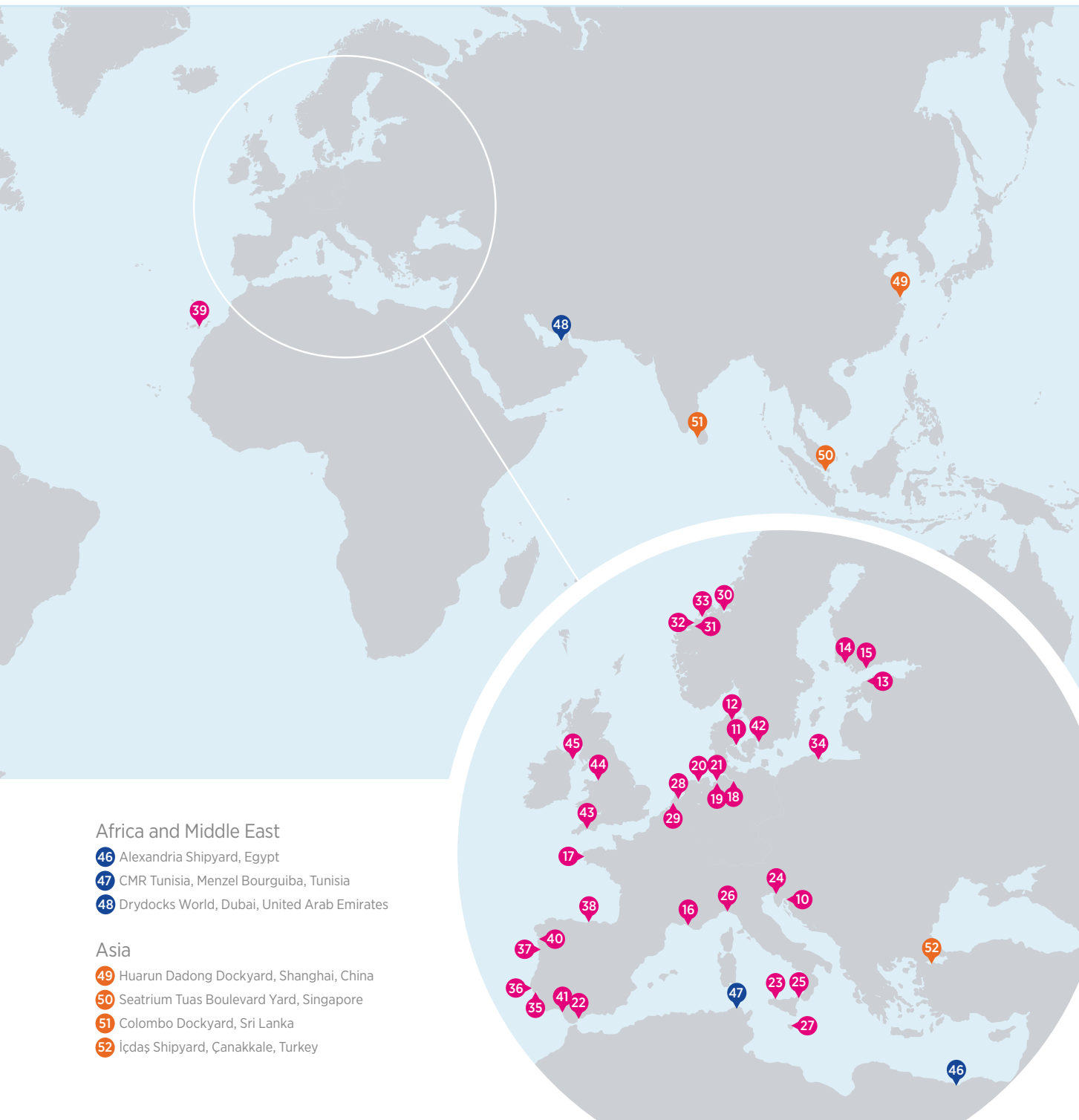
- 10 Viktor Lenac, Rijeka, Croatia
- 11 Fayard, Munkebo, Denmark
- 12 Orskov Yard, Frederikshavn, Denmark
- 13 BLRT Grupp, Tallinn, Estonia
- 14 BLRT Grupp, Turku, Finland
- 15 Helsinki Shipyard, Finland
- 16 Chantier Naval de Marseille, France
- 17 Damen Shiprepair Brest, France
- 18 Blohm+Voss, Hamburg, Germany
- 19 Bredo Dry Docks, Bremerhaven, Germany
- 20 Emden Dockyard, Germany
- 21 Lloyd Werft Bremerhaven, Germany
- 22 Gibdock, Gibraltar
- 23 Fincantieri, Palermo, Italy
- 24 Fincantieri, Trieste, Italy
- 25 Palumbo Shipyards, Messina, Italy
- 26 San Giorgio Del Porto, Genoa, Italy
- 27 Palumbo Shipyards, Paola, Malta
- 28 Damen Shiprepair Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 29 Damen Shiprepair Rotterdam, Netherlands
- 30 Fosen Yard, Rissa, Norway
- 31 Green Yard Kleven, Ulsteinvik, Norway
- 32 Ulstein Verft, Ulsteinvik, Norway
- 33 Vard Søviknes, Søvik, Norway
- 34 Shiprepair Yard Nauta, Gdynia, Poland
- 35 Lisnave, Setúbal, Portugal
- 36 Navalrocha, Lisbon, Portugal
- 37 West Sea, Viana do Castelo, Portugal
- 38 Astander, Santander, Spain
- 39 Astican, Las Palmas, Canary Islands, Spain
- 40 Metalships & Docks, Vigo, Spain
- 41 Navantia, Cadiz, Spain
- 42 Oresund Drydocks, Landskrona, Sweden
- 43 A&P Falmouth, UK
- 44 Cammell Laird, Birkenhead, UK
- 45 Harland & Wolff, Belfast, UK



ships at its Cadiz facility over the past two years than any other yard.

During the first half of 2024, Navantia has completed refurbishment projects on Carnival Cruise Lines' Carnival Vista, Carnival Sunrise, Carnival Firenze and Carnival Glory, Windstar Cruises' yacht Star Pride, Celebrity Cruises'

Celebrity Equinox, Ponant's L'Austral and Scenic Group's Polar Class 6 luxury discovery yacht Scenic Eclipse, which was upgraded to include many features that debuted on sister ship Scenic Eclipse II. This included the addition of a KLAFS relaxation room, infrared sauna seats, three salt therapy and three



heated relaxation lounges in its Senses Spa, as well as updates to outdoor dining venues.

Navantia's Cadiz shipyard is expecting to repair a further nine cruise vessels in 2024, bringing the total number of cruise ship repairs to 17 by the end of the year.

A&P Falmouth, UK

Home to one of the world's largest natural deep-water harbours, A&P Falmouth's facility is one of the biggest ship repair complexes in the UK. A&P Falmouth provides a complete range of marine repair services, thanks to its three large graving docks and extensive

alongside deep-water berthing providing capacity for vessels up to 100,000gt.

In 2024, A&P Falmouth has successfully completed projects on four of Red Funnel's passenger ferries, all of which arrived for annual repairs. The shipyard used its No3 Dock to accommodate Red Eagle and Red Kestrel

simultaneously. The scope of works included hull cleaning and blasting, painting, replacing steel in the hulls, tank cleaning, various inspections and other survey-associated work. A&P Falmouth has also undertaken several projects for P&O Ferries, Irish Ferries, Wightlink and Stena Line in 2024.

Cammell Laird, Birkenhead, UK

Located next to Liverpool Cruise Terminal, Cammell Laird's yard offers full drydock facilities for medium-size cruise ships. Cammell Laird's facility covers 130 acres and includes four dry docks, a non-tidal wet basin and one of the largest modular construction halls in Europe.

Since the start of 2024, Cammell Laird has worked on three Stena Line vessels: Stena Edda, Stena Embla and Stena Adventurer. Stena Adventurer was the ninth ship to dock in the season and underwent a large programme of works, including extensive steel deck repairs, an overhaul of the main propulsion system and other auxiliary works, such as roller fairlead overhauls. Cammell Laird's first double docking of 2024 saw CalMac Ferries' Hebrides and Mersey Ferries' Royal Iris of the Mersey simultaneously undergoing repair works in Number 6 dock.

Harland & Wolff, Belfast, UK

The 327,795-square-metre Belfast shipyard has two dry docks: one at 556 metres long and 93 metres wide, and the other at 335 metres long and 50 metres wide. With an influx of ships and limited dock space, Harland & Wolff is focused on upgrading and expanding its facilities to support vessel maintenance and revitalisation, and fulfil its aim of establishing a Cruise Centre of Excellence.

Among the multiple projects the shipyard has worked on so far in 2024 is Margaritaville at Sea's Islander, which spent four months in dry dock undergoing comprehensive repainting, redesign and cabin refurbishment work. In April, Harland & Wolff welcomed Villa Vie Residences' ship Villa Vie Odyssey. The ship, which was formerly operated by



Photo: Seatrium

Singapore's Seatrium Tuas Boulevard yard boasts seven dry docks (above), while the facilities at Cammell Laird's facility in the UK includes four dry docks (top)

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, had been laid up in Edinburgh, Scotland, since 2020 and as such required a substantial amount of work. The team completely rebuilt the pool deck, created an onboard business centre and installed new rudder stocks (read more about the ship in our exclusive interview with Villa Vie Residences' CEO Mikael Petterson on page 56).

Seatrium Tuas Boulevard Yard, Singapore

With seven dry docks, Seatrium Tuas Boulevard yard can accommodate an array of vessels. Its largest dry dock is 412 metres long by 66 metres wide.

In January 2024, Princess Cruises' Diamond Princess spent 14 days in

drydock undergoing upgrades. These included the addition of a new outdoor Movies Under the Stars screen, LED lighting on the pool deck, and carpets, light fixtures and flatscreen TVs in the casino. Treatment rooms in the Lotus Spa & Fitness Center were also upgraded, as were the digital audio systems in the Princess Theatre, Explorers Lounge and Club Fusion.

From mid-February to early April, Royal Caribbean International's 2002-built Navigator of the Seas was in dry dock at the Tuas Boulevard yard, where the team carried out maintenance work and installed new carpeting and upholstery in public areas and cabins. **CFR**

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Outfitter perspectives

We spoke with three outfitters to find out what's behind the surge in passenger shipping refurbishment projects

Passenger shipping outfitting firms are reporting an increase in the number of refurbishment projects in 2024 and are booking work in for 2025 and beyond.

“Our customers are planning further into the future than they have been over the last few years, and we are seeing increasing confidence in the refurbishment market with much larger renovation and significant revitalisation works in the pipeline,” says Nick Farrell, co-owner of UK-based outfitter Trimline. “Looking ahead to 2025 and 2026, we are seeing perhaps a 40 to 50 per cent growth compared to the last 12 months,

which is fantastic news, both for us and everyone in the industry.”

Several factors are driving the boom. “Shipowners are doing everything from updating decorative features to ensure high standards of quality are maintained onboard, to refurbishing entire spaces to create completely new venues,” says Karen Argue, business development manager at The Deluxe Group, which is based in Northern Ireland. “We are excited the industry has a strong newbuild order book as new innovations onboard will mean operators will continue to revitalise current ships to attract passengers.”

Fiona Nevin, head of global business development at MJM Marine, has noticed more cruise lines paying close attention to sustainability during refit projects. “The state of the global passenger shipping refurbishment market is thriving, with increasing emphasis on sustainability and luxury,” she says. “Improving passenger comfort and incorporating modern amenities that outperform previous models are currently top priorities for shipowners. Future priorities will likely focus on further reducing the environmental impact of ships while incorporating advanced digital experiences.” [CFR](#)



Outfitting firms, such as The Deluxe Group, are experiencing an increase in refurbishment projects onboard older cruise ships

Building exceptional river experiences

Alex Smith asks Wouter Henstra of Den Breejen Shipyard about the shipbuilder's heritage and latest river cruise ship projects

Dutch shipbuilder Den Breejen Shipyard was founded in 1947, based in the municipality of Hardinxveld-Giessendam on the banks of the Merwede river. The shipyard has now been involved in constructing river cruise ships for almost 25 years.

"We are a family business with a strong commitment to the work we deliver," says Wouter Henstra, commercial director of Den Breejen Shipyard. "Our mission is to deliver innovative, high-quality products and services, and safety, efficiency, sustainability and customer satisfaction is of central importance to us."

Since the delivery of the first river cruise ship in 2020, the yard has built 45 more vessels for a variety of river cruise operators.

"Many ships go to regular customers from the USA and Australian shipping companies as well as European owners, but all of our international clientele sail in Europe," explains Henstra. "These operators mainly serve customers travelling from their own country, offering them river cruises in Europe."

Den Breejen's latest river cruise ship was delivered in 2023 for a Swiss shipping company, Thurgau Travel. The 135-metre-long Thurgau Gold is equipped with a battery system which provides power when the ship's first diesel generator reaches peak load, saving fuel. The vessel is also equipped with a heat recovery unit, which uses residual heat from the engine to warm the water onboard.

"Thurgau Gold is a signature project of the shipyard and the flagship of Thurgau Travel," says Henstra. "The vessel has received a Gold Green Award certificate for sustainable ships, the highest achievable certificate in its class."



Den Breejen Shipyard will deliver Transcend Cruises' new river cruise ship in late 2025

In 2024, Den Breejen began building a new ship for an undisclosed luxury river cruise operator and also signed a construction agreement for a 135-metre-long river cruise ship with Transcend Cruises. Delivery is scheduled for late 2025 and a second

ship will follow in 2026, subject to additional financing.

"These new contracts are testament to Den Breejen's expertise in building exceptional ships, and we are grateful for the trust and confidence our clients have given our team," says Henstra. [CFR](#)



"These new contracts are testament to Den Breejen's expertise in building exceptional ships"

A shared vision of excellence

Chantiers de l'Atlantique and The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection have collaborated with several design firms, outfitters and other stakeholders to create the cruise brand's newest all-suite yacht, Ilma

French shipbuilder Chantiers de l'Atlantique marked a new milestone in its multi-year partnership with ultra-luxury cruise brand The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection on 12 July 2024, successfully delivering the operator's newest all-suite yacht at its yard in Saint-Nazaire.

Named Ilma ('water' in Maltese), the 241-metre-long vessel had been under construction at Chantiers de l'Atlantique's yard for two years and was officially handed over during a traditional flag-change ceremony. According to the cruise brand's executive chairman and CEO Jim Murren, the celebration signified the "culmination of a shared vision and the relentless pursuit of excellence" and served as a "testament to the craftsmanship and dedication of all those involved".

Ilma is the second yacht Chantiers de l'Atlantique has built for The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection – the first, Evrima, debuted in May 2022. The yacht boasts an exterior created by design studio Aivan, interiors designed by AD Associates, lighting by DPA, tables and sofas by Robos Contract Furniture, galleys outfitted by Almaco, and more. It accommodates up to 448 guests in 224 suites, all of which have floor-to-ceiling windows and a private terrace.

Other onboard spaces include five restaurants, seven bars, a wine vault, an expanded marina with a mezzanine, a spa, three fitness spaces, and an outdoor pool and entertainment area. Another notable highlight is the Beach House, a Pan-Latin restaurant and lounge space with 180-degree views, which was conceptualised by Chapi Chapo Design.

In addition, Ilma features advanced water treatment systems, technologies



Jim Murren of The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection (centre left) and Laurent Castaing of Chantiers de l'Atlantique (centre right) sign the delivery papers, watched by the shipyard's project director Arnaud Le Joncour

to optimise energy efficiency, electric propulsion systems from ABB, and four dual-fuel engines, which will be primarily powered by LNG.

"Ilma represents a collaboration of two like-minded organisations committed to excellence, offering the best in both hospitality and shipbuilding," says Arnaud Le Joncour, project director and senior vice president of sales and marketing at Chantiers de l'Atlantique.

"The design and construction of Ilma has been a distinctive project for Chantiers de l'Atlantique that has elevated the highest luxury standards in terms of guest experience, technical innovation and craftsmanship."

Following its maiden voyage from Monte Carlo on 2 September, Ilma will sail to iconic yachting destinations throughout the Mediterranean, Caribbean and Northern Europe.



Members of the shipyard team take down the flags of France and Chantiers de l'Atlantique to signify that the ship has now changed hands

Chantiers de l'Atlantique will deliver the brand's third ship Luminara in 2025.

"We are deeply grateful to the exceptional teams at Chantiers de l'Atlantique, whose hard work and passion have brought our vision to life," says Murren. [CFR](#)

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Change begins beneath the surface

Alice Chambers asks ABB's Tuomo Salmi and The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection's Tobias King about a new propulsion concept that is the result of evolution and technology

Whales are able to move through water effortlessly thanks to their distinctive body shapes. With a robust structure to support their long pectoral fins, humpbacks move in the most dynamic and powerful way, with significant thrust and acceleration.

The idea of ship propulsion systems mimicking the movement of the whale tail has been around for a hundred years, according to ABB Marine, an electric, digital and connected solutions provider for shipowners.

But to turn an idea into a reality, the timing must be right; there needs to be

a demand for such a product. The *CLIA 2024 State of the Cruise Industry Report* demonstrates just that, with 32 pilot projects and collaborative initiatives underway to test sustainable fuel and propulsion technology for cruise ships.

A notable initiative is the joint study conducted by ABB and The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection. ABB worked with the luxury cruise line to model ABB Dynafin, an electric propulsion concept inspired by the dynamic movements of a whale's tail, with the potential to help ship operators significantly reduce fuel consumption.

"Our Dynafin propulsion concept and its blade design are the results of

years of research and development in hydrodynamics," says Tuomo Salmi, global commercial manager for Compact Azipod and Dynafin sales for marine propulsion at ABB. "Dynafin is the latest addition to ABB's propulsion portfolio, which includes a state-of-the-art Azipod propulsion product range aimed at extending our offering and future-proofing new ship designs."

The concept solution features a large wheel connected to five vertical blades, each of which is operated by an individual motor and control system. The wheel is also powered by an electric motor and rotates at 30 to



"Our Dynafin propulsion concept and its blade design are the results of years of research and development in hydrodynamics"

Tuomo Salmi
ABB



The design of ABB Dynafin is inspired by the movements of a whale's tail

Photo: Unsplash/Oliver Tsappis



The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection tested the Dynafin solution on its latest ship Ilma



80 rounds per minute. The combined motion of the wheel and the blades generates propulsion and steering forces simultaneously, and can be optimised for different ship types, hull shapes and operational requirements.

The ABB and The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection study found that Dynafin would yield significant hydrodynamic performance improvements for its latest cruise yacht, Ilma. The vessel required 12 per cent less propulsion power, achieving a 40-tonne weight saving and freeing up over 90 cubic metres of space for alternative use. Salmi also anticipates a strong operational profile that allows for

longer service intervals, further reducing lifetime costs.

The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection has agreed to continue providing ABB with operational data to support and develop the concept further.

“We are committed to supporting developments that improve energy efficiency and thereby reduce the carbon footprint of our industry,” says Tobias King, vice president of newbuild for The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection. “The findings align with our expectations: a significant reduction in fuel consumption and air emissions on the itineraries we are planning for Ilma.

“With the Dynafin concept, we also see other potential benefits linked to manoeuvrability, position keeping, reliability and improved comfort for our guests staying onboard. We will continue our support of this technology development as it progresses further and will certainly consider this solution as we develop our future concepts as well as retrofits, if this becomes a possibility. We are also paying close attention to developments on sustainable fuels and working with other suppliers such as Chantiers de l’Atlantique, DNV and Wärtsilä to achieve this.”

Salmi adds: “We are proud to have collaborated with The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection in a study that validates the Dynafin propulsion concept. We uncovered the benefits of increased propulsion efficiency, the potential for more efficient arrangement of guest and crew spaces, and savings of 710 tonnes of LNG fuel based on the ship’s operational profile and reduced propulsion power consumption.” **CFR**

Transitioning to a greener fleet

Jon Ingleton sits down with Finn Wollesen and Brian Bender Madsen to hear how KNUD E. HANSEN is helping shipowners to transition to more sustainable operations

KNUD E. HANSEN was established in 1937 as one of the first independent naval architect companies in the world. It has a strong reputation for designing small cruise ships and ferries and is skilled in designing specific functional elements for bigger ships.

“Today we have over 100 staff working across Europe, the USA and Australia, all with a background in either engineering or design,” says Finn Wollesen, managing director at KNUD E. HANSEN. “We specialise in new vessel design, but quite a big part of the business is dedicated to upgrading ships. We provide cruise operators with high-level engineering services, especially for certain big service installations like stability, fire and safety, HVAC and alternative fuels.”

The firm has built significant sustainability knowledge over the years and is now using this when designing new ships and working on refits. It helps shipowners to develop a strategic framework for transitioning their fleets towards more environmentally responsible operations by optimising energy use, harvesting waste energy and embracing sustainable technologies to reduce emissions.

“Right now, every shipowner in the world is considering their sustainability strategy, including the fuel they use and how to increase efficiency,” says Brian Bender Madsen, head of machinery and systems at KNUD E. HANSEN. “Most cruise and ferry companies don’t have the skills to do that entirely in-house, but we are well-placed to guide them

through this process by helping them to consider all of the known factors and anticipating future factors.”

Madsen explains that it is easier for KNUD E. HANSEN to help clients develop a comprehensive green transition strategy if it is involved in the initial design and build process for the ship, but says the firm is “equally adept at working with shipowners to incorporate more sustainable technologies into existing fleets.” For bigger cruise ships, KNUD E. HANSEN will likely be part of a larger transition team and take responsibility for specific technologies.

Typically, KNUD E. HANSEN starts projects by reviewing the operating profile of each ship in the fleet and then establishes measurable targets, and short-, medium- and long-term



“Every shipowner in the world is considering their sustainability strategy”

Finn Wollesen



KNUD E. HANSEN provides cruise operators with high-level engineering services



KNUD E. HANSEN employees analysing energy-saving challenges for shipowners

strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It also carries out a full audit of anything onboard the ship that consumes energy to identify energy-saving opportunities.

“For cruise ships and ferries, HVAC typically has one of the biggest demands on electrical power, so this is a fairly common starting point,” says Wollesen. “The galleys can also yield significant efficiencies but they are a little trickier because so many are tied to operational nuances, such as how many heating plates the catering team want to have on standby. We work through every shipboard system that consumes power, optimising each individually and this delivers collective gains.”

To make this process easier, KNUD E. HANSEN has developed a comprehensive tool that enables it to calculate the impact of different energy-saving solutions – such as power supply from batteries or fuel cells – so it can

evaluate which are best for helping the shipowner to achieve its goals in the context of the broader green transition strategy. For example, potential energy-saving wins are weighed up against available budget and in some instances, KNUD E. HANSEN may recommend offloading ships in the fleet.

“Every conceivable data set can be entered into the calculation tool so that if the owner wants to consider different technical options, we can see how each choice will impact everything else,” says Madsen. “This allows us to find the optimum configuration at the point of design specific to the ship and operational profile.”

The firm conducts regular performance assessments for its clients, leveraging its powerful calculation tool to analyse current operations and identify areas where enhancements can be made.

“With these data sets we can get a good idea about the optimisation

opportunities that are likely to deliver the biggest return for the owner,” says Madsen. “We don’t just write a report to hand over to someone else; we also offer to provide design work to see the project to a successful conclusion. We’re talking about maybe a range of 20 to 100 opportunities for improvement across everything onboard that might collectively reduce energy consumption by 30 per cent.”

Taking a holistic approach and developing a well-considered strategy eliminates the risk of shipowners making easy, one-off changes that may ostensibly save energy, but inadvertently compromise the results of other available options.

“While a change might improve one system, it could negatively affect another,” says Madsen. “When we analyse an opportunity, we’re making thousands of trade-off decisions across an entire ship so we arrive at the best cumulative solution for the owner.” **CFR**

Continued growth and success

Aros Marine's 15-year anniversary comes at a time when the interior outfitter is experiencing fantastic growth



In 2023, Aros Marine completed two of its biggest refit projects – on Hurtigruten Norway's Trollfjord (left) and ForSea's Tycho Brahe

Fifteen years ago, Giedrius Valainis and Genadij Zarikov co-founded a turnkey interior outfitting company in Lithuania that started with a team of just five workers. Three years into their venture, they won their first big order and, since then, Zarikov says the company has undergone “unprecedented growth, with work doubling, tripling and quadrupling all at once”.

The last two years particularly showcases this expansion, both in terms of the size and complexity of the projects and the profile of the clients.

In April and May 2023, Aros Marine completed one of its largest refit projects to date – on Hurtigruten Norway's passenger ship, Trollfjord. Aros Marine

refurbished 235 staterooms, 23 suites and all the related corridors. It also renovated over 2,500 square metres of public zones, including the Panorama Lounge, à la carte restaurant, brasserie seating area and main dining area.

Another notable project for Aros Marine was on Tycho Brahe, a battery-electric ferry owned by Øresundslinjen and operated by ForSea on the route connecting Helsingør in Denmark with Helsingborg in Sweden. The company revamped decks four and five, with a team of 100 employees executing the work in 22 days, covering Tycho Brahe's main hall, catering spaces, the shop, lounge, restaurant, lobby bar, public areas and staircases.

Aros Marine has experienced remarkable growth over the past year, with a significant project worth more than €40 million (\$44 million) contributing to its success. With many other projects lined up through 2028, and expected to bring in more than €130 million (\$143.2 million), the interior outfitter is sure to witness continued and sustained growth.

“Promoting Lithuania is also a very important and rewarding task,” says Valainis. “Twenty years ago, nobody knew much about the country, so to see Lithuania's name flying high makes me very happy and at Aros Marine, we are determined to innovate and be part of the biggest turnkey projects in the cruise industry.” **CFR**

Electric evolution

The new eVSP concept from technology company Voith is intended to deliver a sustainable propulsion solution for the shipping industry

Developed almost 100 years ago by Austrian engineer Ernst Schneider, the Voith Schneider Propeller (VSP) concept provides a unique propulsion solution. A circular disk with vertically installed movable and controllable blades rotates at the bottom of the vessel, allowing the strength and direction of propulsion to be set according to the rotational speed of the disk and angle of the blades. The VSP concept provides precise

manoeuvrability under a range of sea conditions, allowing the solution to be used across the world for a variety of vessel types.

In keeping with the drive towards eco-friendly shipping, the system's manufacturer, Voith, has developed the electric Voith Schneider Propeller (eVSP). The new solution integrates an electric motor into the propeller. This integrated approach reduces the space needed to install the propeller by

decreasing the size of the drive system and eliminating the shaft train, which helps to deliver a total space and weight saving of between 10 and 30 per cent compared to the traditional VSP system.

The eVSP also eliminates the need for gears in the propulsion drivelines, which are mostly necessary for speed reduction between the driving motor and propeller. According to Voith, their removal can therefore reduce the energy lost by the system and deliver higher efficiency. The system also uses permanent magnet technology, which allows the motor to maintain its efficiency across a wider range of speeds and power requirements, from low-load operations to extreme wind and weather conditions.

Since the delivery of the first eVSP system in 2020, the system has, in addition to others, been ordered by several different ferry operators for both single- and double-ended ferries. For example, two eVSP26s will be used for the hybrid drives at the stern of Caledonian Maritime Assets' new ferries, which will sail to the Scottish island of Islay from autumn 2024.

Voith is continuing to build upon the eVSP concept with its latest iteration, an eight-bladed eVSP. The eight-bladed system is intended to allow vessels to operate more quietly than previous iterations, reducing underwater noise, which can cause damage to marine life and the environment. The eight-bladed eVSP will be showcased by Voith at SMM 2024, where the company will also discuss the demand for sustainable propulsion concepts and digitalisation across the shipping industry. [CFR](#)



Strengthening safety measures

Although research shows general maritime safety is improving, weather and fire-related risks remain concerns for cruise and ferry operators. Alice Chambers reports

The maritime industry is becoming increasingly safer. Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) reports that while worldwide cruise ship capacity grew by more than 55 per cent from 2009 to 2018, the number of operational incidents decreased by 37 per cent during the same period. CLIA suggests this is thanks to crew member training, constant improvements carried out by shipowners, and adherence to precautions and strict regulations.

Every ship has to be built, equipped and operated in accordance with the

international maritime treaty known as the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Convention, developed by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Originally written for steel ships plying the North Atlantic in winter in 1914 after the Titanic disaster in 1912, SOLAS has since been updated on multiple occasions – in 1929, 1948, 1960, 1974 and so on – to set minimum standards for the safe construction, equipment and operation of all ships.

Despite passenger ship operators following these conventions, they

still have to deal with ongoing risks. For example, cruise operations can be significantly affected by unpredictable weather events, with brands often opting to change itineraries to protect passengers and crew in these instances. In July 2024, for instance, Royal Caribbean International cancelled multiple stops at the island of Roatán in the Caribbean due to the impact of the Category 5 Hurricane Beryl, while MSC Cruises redirected MSC World Europa from its planned stopover in Malta due to hazardous wind conditions in Valletta's Grand Harbour. The ship's captain diverted the ship from Malta because there was potential for the wind to exceed 30 knots, which would have rendered manoeuvres at the port unsafe.

"The ultimate decision to enter port remains with the master of the vessel, who may consider cancelling the call subject to the circumstances of the case if he deems it unsafe to enter port," said the Malta transport ministry.

In some cases, such as with hurricanes, the captain knows at least a day in advance if the scheduled route will be unsafe for passengers. This is because they can use identification systems, electronic nautical charts, e-navigation and hydrographic data to track information about sea conditions and the status of navigational channels.



Photo: iStock/FrankRamsphot

The Category 5 Hurricane Beryl hit the Caribbean in late June and early July 2024



Several cruise lines have changed their itineraries this year to avoid the impact of dangerous weather conditions

A lot of cruise lines are also impacted by geopolitical situations and redirect their ships to prevent being caught up in these issues too. Recent examples include the ongoing unrest in the Middle East where Marella Cruises, Princess Cruises, Seabourn Cruises and more have opted to re-route their Red Sea itineraries to avoid the conflict.

Similarly, ferry lines simulate and compare voyage plans to avoid sailing in challenging waters. Tuomas Häkkinen, account director of safety solutions at NAPA, discussed the importance of real-time stability and voyage monitoring for onboard and onshore operations during a presentation at the 2023 Interferry annual conference. He highlighted the need for adaptable weight distribution planning for ‘unknown cargo’ onboard ferries and the importance of using data to predict, test and plan ahead for voyage optimisation. This emphasis on proactive planning and data utilisation is particularly crucial given the persistent safety challenges in the maritime industry.

Onboard fires also present a key safety issue for passenger shipping operators. The *Allianz Safety and Shipping Review 2024* found that there were 205 reported fire incidents during 2023 alone, the second highest total for a decade and the fourth leading cause of all shipping incidents.

To prevent fires and the threat to life, scale of damage and severe repair costs they can lead to, cruise and ferry companies employ a range of protection systems. They include passive fire- and smoke-fighting measures, fire dampers, ventilation systems, and fire-rated interior doors and partitions that will contain a fire until a vessel can get to a port.

Despite the rigorous international standards set by SOLAS to ensure maritime safety, ferry accidents continue to occur at alarming rates in some regions of the world. Africa is home to the highest number of ferry fatalities in the world. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the United Republic of Tanzania, the Republic of Senegal and the Federal Republic of Nigeria, there were collectively over 12,000 domestic

ferry fatalities between 2000 and 2021, according to the 2023 World Maritime report *Safety of domestic ferries: A scoping study of seven high-risk countries*.

Various factors have a direct impact on safe ferry operations, including ticketing and passenger counting, vessel design and classification, insurance and financing, management culture, technical management, and political will. All of these topics were discussed in detail at the Africa Ferry Safety Seminar in April 2024, which was co-hosted by Interferry, IMO and regulatory authority Tanzania Shipping Agencies Corporation. The event focused on overcrowding and overloading, which are significant problems in developing countries that put passenger safety at risk.

“This event represents a vital step forward in prioritising ferry safety across Africa,” said Mike Corrigan, CEO of Interferry. “The collaborative spirit and commitment from all attendees were truly inspiring. Together, we can address existing challenges and build a safer future for African ferry operations.” **CFR**

Enabling better protection

We report on a selection of solutions and services companies have developed to help cruise and ferry operators improve safety onboard their ships

A leading light

Daniamant specialises in designing, developing and manufacturing globally renowned marine safety equipment. One of its latest developments, the omni-directional electrical optical (ODEO) SOS electronic flare, is redefining safety at sea by providing crews with a crucial lifeline in emergencies. The flare meets U.S. Coast Guard requirements, meaning it can be used instead of pyrotechnic flares in some countries when used with the distress flag.



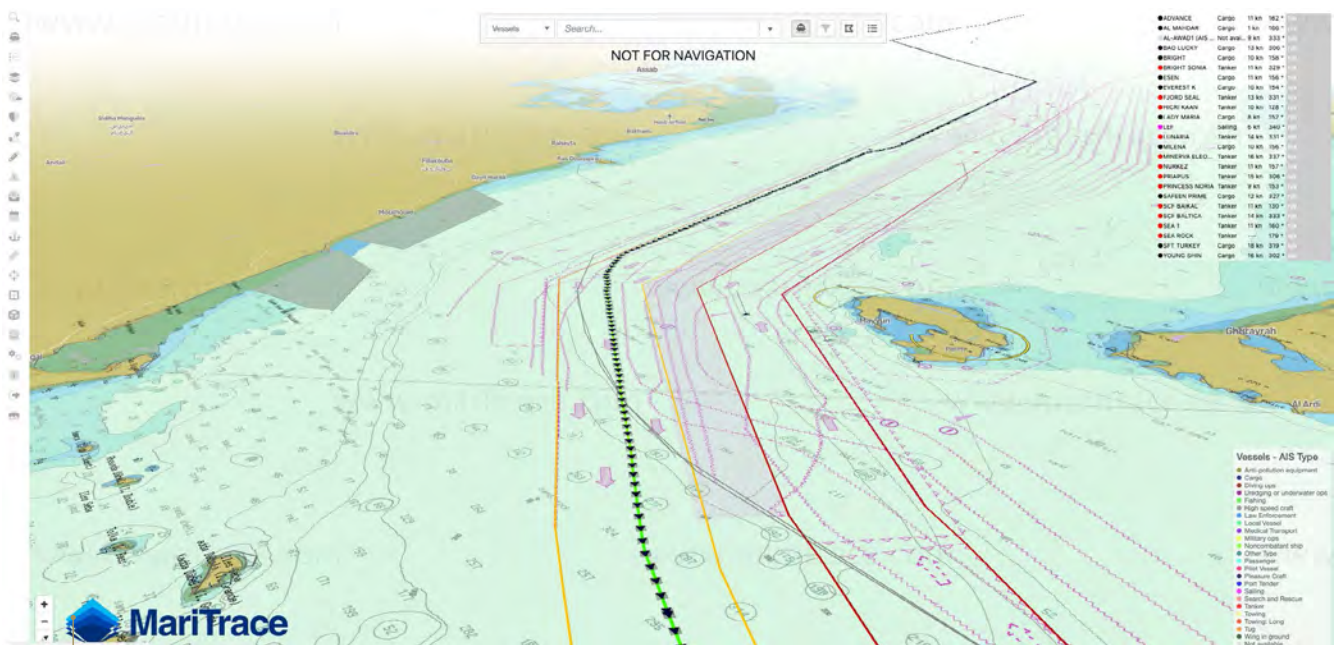
Signs and lights for emergencies

Everlux Maritime provides photoluminescent safety signage solutions and is committed to researching and developing high-quality products and services.

With extensive experience in designing, manufacturing, supplying and installing low location lighting systems, Everlux is also approved by DNV to supply the onboard lighting measurement services that are due every five years to ensure shipowners meet regulatory requirements for signage.

As an approved service supplier, Everlux aims to ensure its experienced and qualified team adheres to best practices and complies with all the applicable regulations.





Tracking data for safer decisions

As maritime threats evolve, shipowners should consider using advanced vessel tracking for cruise ships and ferries to ensure the safety of crew and passengers onboard. New tracking device innovations are offering an added layer of security by delivering real-time monitoring and comprehensive risk management capabilities, which are essential for ensuring passenger safety when sailing in high-risk areas.

Mercury, MariTrace's latest innovation, combines design with advanced data capabilities for situational awareness, allowing shipowners to make informed decisions and swiftly respond to potential threats. Mercury surpasses publicly broadcasted automatic identification system (AIS) capabilities and can securely capture existing and historic data, even when internet and AIS is switched off.

Making informed choices

NAPA's ship stability and emergency management systems help to deliver real-time insights to enhance both everyday operations and critical emergency responses. NAPA's detailed 3D models form the foundation of its onboard software, ensuring accurate and dependable information for safe operations. NAPA Stability allows precise management of both intact and damage stability, keeping ships, crew and cargo safe at all times. In emergencies, the NAPA Emergency Computer estimates ship survivability and demonstrates how countermeasures affect the situation, enabling a safe return to port. Additionally, NAPA Fleet Intelligence automatically transfers shipboard data to the shoreside team, providing real-time situational awareness of an entire fleet at a glance.



Supporting safe exits

Viking is continually expanding its life-saving equipment portfolio for maritime safety and recently received the go ahead to manufacture its Undertun marine evacuation systems. Easily installed onboard height-restricted ships, Undertun is a combined walkway and slide that integrates with the side of the ship. Featuring its own power source, Undertun can be operated by a single user and can accommodate up to 153 people at a time.

As part of its focus on marine fire safety, Viking also recently reached agreements to distribute Bridgehill fire blankets and the Rosenbauer Battery Extinguisher System following a project focused on the impact of an increasing number of transporting electric vehicles by ferry.



Why lifeboat safety must be taken seriously

By Captain Kuba Szymanski, InterManager

Although they are designed to save lives, lifeboats have caused many fatalities over the years. InterManager is working with the IMO and other industry stakeholders to prevent future accidents

Lifeboats are meant to save lives, aren't they? Yet figures collated by InterManager over more than 40 years reveal that lifeboats and rescue craft have been responsible for the deaths of some 540 people.

These figures span the entire maritime industry but, delving deeper, we can see that 15 per cent of these accidents happened onboard cruise ships. When you consider that cruise is the smallest sector of the maritime industry in terms of the number of ships – 600 vessels

versus 12,000 container ships, a similar number of bulk carriers, and around 10,000 tankers – then this figure is quite alarming. In addition, ro-ro ferries account for a five per cent share of lifeboat accidents.

So, what's going wrong? Can lifeboats, an essential item of life-saving equipment onboard ships, really be inherently dangerous?

Some years ago, InterManager became aware of increasing concerns from ship managers and seafarers regarding the

level of accident fatalities and serious injuries caused by lifeboats. We began researching the issue and discovered there was no central record of lifeboat accidents, so as a member of the International Lifeboat Group, we started to collate them, going back in maritime records as far as 1980.

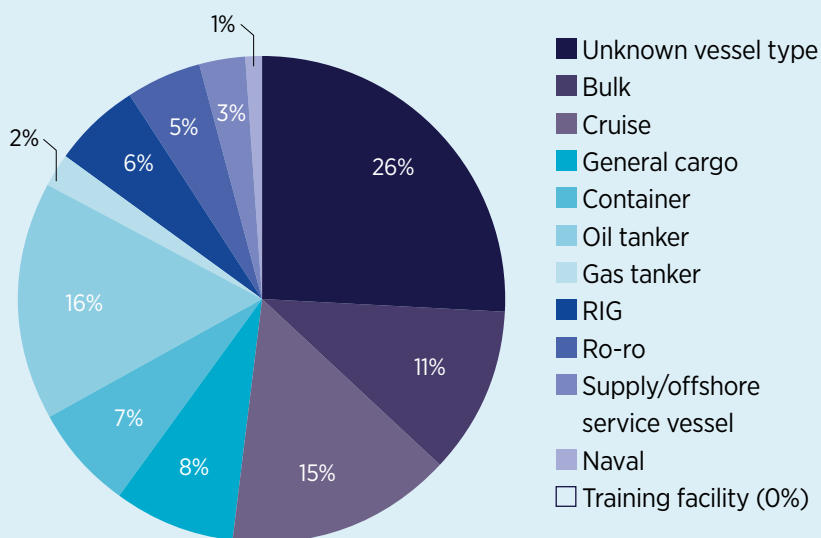
When we analysed these statistics, we identified that the majority of these accidents occur during mandatory lifeboat drills and involve seafarers. The biggest root cause is design failure – most commonly failure of the release mechanism, hooks and wires.

This concern is now fairly well-known among many crew members and they are understandably reluctant to undertake lifeboat testing. Who would want to risk their life in the process of testing a piece of supposed safety equipment?

Recognising that legislative change was needed, InterManager has worked closely with a range of maritime stakeholders to fully research the issue, and together we have raised the matter with the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

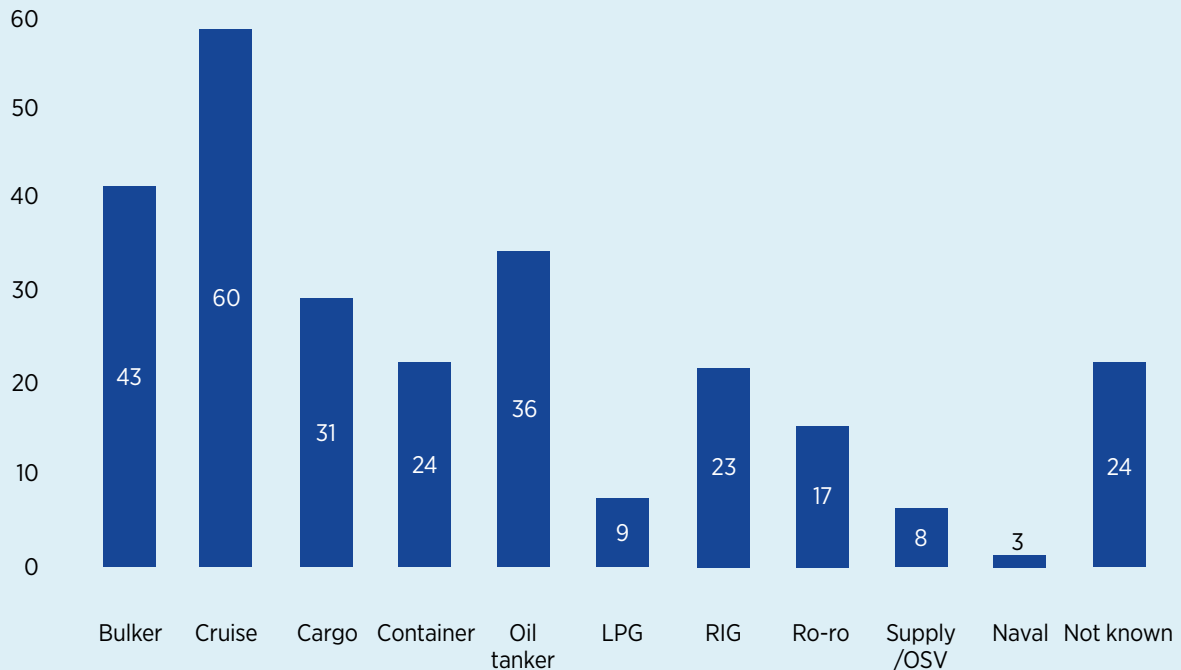
The International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) was first adopted in 1914 in response to the 1912 Titanic disaster, where there were famously insufficient lifeboats for the number of passengers onboard. Lifeboats are covered under Chapter III of SOLAS, which incorporates requirements for life-saving appliances and arrangements, including those for lifeboats, rescue boats

Percentage of lifeboat accidents according to vessel type



Source: InterManager

Types of ships involved in lifeboat accidents



Source: InterManager

and life jackets according to the type of ship. The International Life-Saving Appliance (LSA) Code gives specific technical requirements for life-saving appliances and is mandatory under Regulation 34. This states that all life-

crew. However, the regulation does not require that crew to be onboard when the lifeboat is launched. This is because many of the lifeboat fatalities have occurred during launch of the lifeboats, often due to problems with the hooks.

account all safety aspects. InterManager and other shipping industry groups have raised awareness of this amendment among flag state inspectors.

Work to improve lifeboat safety continues. In May 2024, the IMO's Maritime Safety Committee adopted amendments to the LSA Code in relation to lifeboat single fall and hook systems and the lowering speed of survival craft and rescue boats. These amendments are expected to enter into force on 1 January 2026 and will apply both to passenger vessels and merchant ships.

InterManager will continue to take a leading role on this issue, ensuring that lifeboats do indeed save lives as intended. **CFR**

Captain Kuba Szymanski is secretary general of InterManager

“Can lifeboats, an essential item of life-saving equipment onboard ships, really be inherently dangerous?”

saving appliances and arrangements shall comply with the applicable requirements of the LSA Code.

SOLAS regulation III/19.3.3.3 mandates each lifeboat to be launched at least once every three months during an ‘abandon ship’ drill and manoeuvred in the water by its assigned operating

In 2009, the IMO's Maritime Safety Committee agreed that the assigned operating crew should not be obligated to be onboard lifeboats during launching, unless the master, within the authority conferred to him/her by paragraph 5.5 of the International Safety Management Code, considers it necessary, taking into



Protecting ships in stormy seas

By Lieutenant Corey Landante, U.S. Coast Guard

U.S. Coast Guard is working with classification societies to develop new standards that will minimise the risk of evolving threats to cruise vessels operating in severe weather conditions

Recent investigations into cruise ship marine casualties that involved severe weather conditions and operations in remote Antarctic areas highlighted existing gaps in international safety standards and evolving threats. The incidents underscore potential design and operational vulnerabilities inherent to cruise operations in hostile and unpredictable regions of the world well beyond the reach of traditional emergency services.

Severe weather and heavy seas, which are standard throughout the Antarctic region and increasing worldwide due to climate change, can pose serious risks to cruise ships despite the availability of advanced forecasting and navigation technologies. Recent incidents have led to structural damage, temporary losses of stability, and casualties among passengers and crew.

A case in point was an incident that occurred south of Cape Horn in Chile, where a large wave struck a cruise ship

broadside and shattered the windows of seven upper deck cabins resulting in one fatality and several injuries. The subsequent investigations uncovered significant shortfalls in the international standards for cruise ship structures and window installations in relation to the force of breaking waves that are typical to the Antarctic region.

A second incident related to breaking waves occurred in January 2024 in the Gulf of Mexico. Although this region has not traditionally posed heavy weather



Photo: U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer 2nd Class Patrick Kelley



The U.S. Coast Guard is working with other industry stakeholders to introduce new standards to reduce the number of cruise ship accidents caused by stormy seas

threats to the cruise industry outside of hurricane season, a cruise ship transiting south of Louisiana suffered water damage to approximately 200 staterooms and 12 minor injuries during a stronger than

for incidents involving cruise ship excursion vessels incidents to result in serious passenger injuries and fatalities, two rigid hull inflatable boat accidents in Antarctic waters near Elephant

“Investigations uncovered significant shortfalls in the international standards for cruise ship structures”

forecasted thunderstorm, which generated 100-knot winds and seas of up to 20 feet.

Recent casualty investigations of incidents during Antarctic excursions originating from cruise ships also raised new safety concerns as tourists endeavour to experience the polar region and its wildlife firsthand. While its uncommon

Island were stark reminders of the risks associated with operating in frigid regions with no possibility of air evacuation to an appropriate trauma centre. The subsequent investigations revealed that operators should provide the following for expeditions in extreme environments: adequate crew training, effective personal

protective equipment, multiple vessels for remote areas (the buddy system) and consistent implementation of manufacturer instructions for small boats.

To help counter the threats posed by heavy seas, the U.S. Coast Guard is engaging with the applicable classification societies and the International Association of Classification Societies to ensure that class rules for vessel structures account for breaking waves that impact the vessel from all potential angles. This type of collaborative approach under the International Maritime Organization framework will ensure that cruise ship standards and protocols can be adapted as needed in changing operating environments to avoid future incidents. **CFR**

Lieutenant Corey Landante is an officer for the U.S. Coast Guard



Going green in the Med

By Paul Holthus, World Ocean Council

World Ocean Council is collaborating with multiple stakeholders to turn the Mediterranean into a paragon of how the global shipping industry can move towards a zero-emission future while driving economic benefits

The shipping industry, which has traditionally been a major contributor to global emissions, is undergoing a radical shift driven by the imperative to achieve net-zero emissions. This transformation is not just a response to regulatory pressures but also a proactive move by the industry to align with global sustainability goals. The Mediterranean region stands at the crossroads of maritime history and innovation, where traditional shipping routes

intersect with pioneering environmental initiatives. As the world pivots towards sustainability, the shipping industry faces the formidable challenge of reducing its environmental footprint.

A beacon in this transformative journey is the Green Marine Med project, which unites the Mediterranean Green Shipping Network and is backed by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. This ambitious project aims to revolutionise green shipping across the Mediterranean by fostering

collaboration between northern and southern shores. It mobilises the comprehensive Mediterranean green shipping community, representing the full value chain including actors from the full vessel community, ports and marinas, fuel and energy, as well as finance, investment, innovation and other stakeholders.

The World Ocean Council (WOC), in partnership with the Centro Tecnológico Naval y del Mar, is coordinating Green Marine Med and



Photo: Port of Barcelona

World Ocean Council is collaborating with the port of Barcelona and other stakeholders to turn the Spanish city into a leader in maritime sustainability



The Green Marine Med project involves stakeholders in the vessel communities, ports, marinas, fuel and energy, finance, investment, innovation, and other sectors in the Mediterranean Green Shipping Network

leading a consortium of 18 international partners from across both shores of the Mediterranean. As a unique international alliance and a membership organisation, the global Blue Economy Business and Investment Organization WOC brings together multiple industries including prominent shipping companies, such as Swire Shipping, Maersk and Cruise Line Industry Association, to drive leadership, collaboration and action on sustainable development and corporate ocean responsibility. Through its involvement in initiatives like Green Marine Med, WOC demonstrates its commitment to leveraging corporate leadership to tackle critical challenges facing the ocean.

of Excellence on Mediterranean Green Shipping in 2024. This centre will not only serve as a hub for innovation and best practices but also as a platform for catalysing investment and pilot projects in green shipping startups throughout Mediterranean cities and ports. It aims to unite the private industry, investment sectors and experts from various fields to create a ‘community of practice’. This collaborative effort will tackle the multisectoral challenges and opportunities in green shipping, setting a global standard for maritime sustainability.

Moreover, the Green Marine Med project is taking proactive steps to engage the comprehensive Mediterranean green shipping

One of the highlights of this project is the upcoming challenge competition focused on Mediterranean green shipping, which will launch on 4 November 2024. It will identify and support the best green shipping innovations, providing crucial capacity-building training to selected startups and entrepreneurs during a mini bootcamp. This initiative will not only accelerate green innovation but also strengthen the region’s leadership in sustainable maritime practices.

The Mediterranean region is not just navigating towards a greener future; it is setting a course for the rest of the world to follow. The journey to net zero in the shipping industry is undoubtedly complex and fraught with challenges. However, the collective commitment of Mediterranean partners and the innovative strategies emerging from projects like Green Marine Med provide a beacon of hope. The Mediterranean is poised to become a global exemplar of how regional collaboration and innovative thinking can lead to substantial environmental and economic benefits. As these initiatives unfold, they promise to redefine the maritime industry, paving the way for a sustainable, zero-emission future that harmoniously blends economic growth with environmental stewardship. **CFR**

Paul Holthus is CEO and founder of World Ocean Council

“WOC will launch a revolutionary Center of Excellence on Mediterranean Green Shipping in 2024”

The partnership between WOC and both the city and port of Barcelona in Spain further emphasises the commitment to promoting Barcelona as a global Blue Economy city. This alliance enhances the city’s role as a leader in maritime sustainability, attracting global attention and investment. Together with Barcelona, WOC will launch a revolutionary Center

community. It includes stakeholders from the entire vessel value chain, ports, marinas and the energy sector. Through national and regional stakeholder events in Spain, Italy, Turkey, and via online platforms, the project is facilitating robust connections and fostering collaborations that are vital for the green transformation of the maritime sector.

Smooth sailing with electronic work permits

When undertaking high-risk work onboard a ship, safety and efficiency are key. Tommi Vihavainen tells Amber Hickman how NAPA's new Permit to Work solution makes the process smoother, faster and safer

Ship management isn't always smooth sailing, and when maintenance is needed, it is important that the crew can start the job as soon as possible.

Before this work can begin, however, they must first fill out the appropriate forms and get them authorised by a senior officer. Traditionally this has been a paper-based process, but maritime software provider NAPA aims to digitalise this

procedure with its new solution, NAPA Permit to Work.

"One of the pain points of a traditional paper-based process is that it can be very slow," says Tommi Vihavainen, director of development at NAPA. "For example, if a worker needs to physically walk around the ship to get their form signed by a senior officer it can cause delays. However, with a digital solution like NAPA Permit to Work, they can request

the authorisation through the application and get a response almost instantly.

"Furthermore, using a digital solution allows ship operators to control and monitor processes and validate inputs so there are less errors and increased real-time visibility across the ship of all ongoing and planned work for all departments. This increases safety and minimises the risk of accidents."

In addition to delivering significant benefits for maintenance workers, digital solutions like NAPA Permit to Work can improve the passenger experience.

"When the ship is safe, the passengers are safe," says Vihavainen. "Furthermore, it is important for passengers to enjoy their time onboard. If there is a maintenance issue affecting this then it's in the shipowner's best interests to get the problem fixed as soon as possible, which is where a digitalised permit process can help."

The Permit to Work solution is part of a wider portfolio of solutions that also includes NAPA Stability and NAPA Logbook. These tools can work together to collect and exchange data to further enhance operational efficiency and insight.

"The different applications complement each other and allow data to exchange fluidly, providing a more holistic view of what's happening onboard," says Vihavainen. "For example, if automation data such as fuel consumption figures are higher or lower than normal, ship engineers can compare them to the logbook data and see if there are any contributing factors, like unexpected operations or more passengers than usual."





According to Vihavainen, having a wide range of data is also key to improving ship operations and unlocking new opportunities.

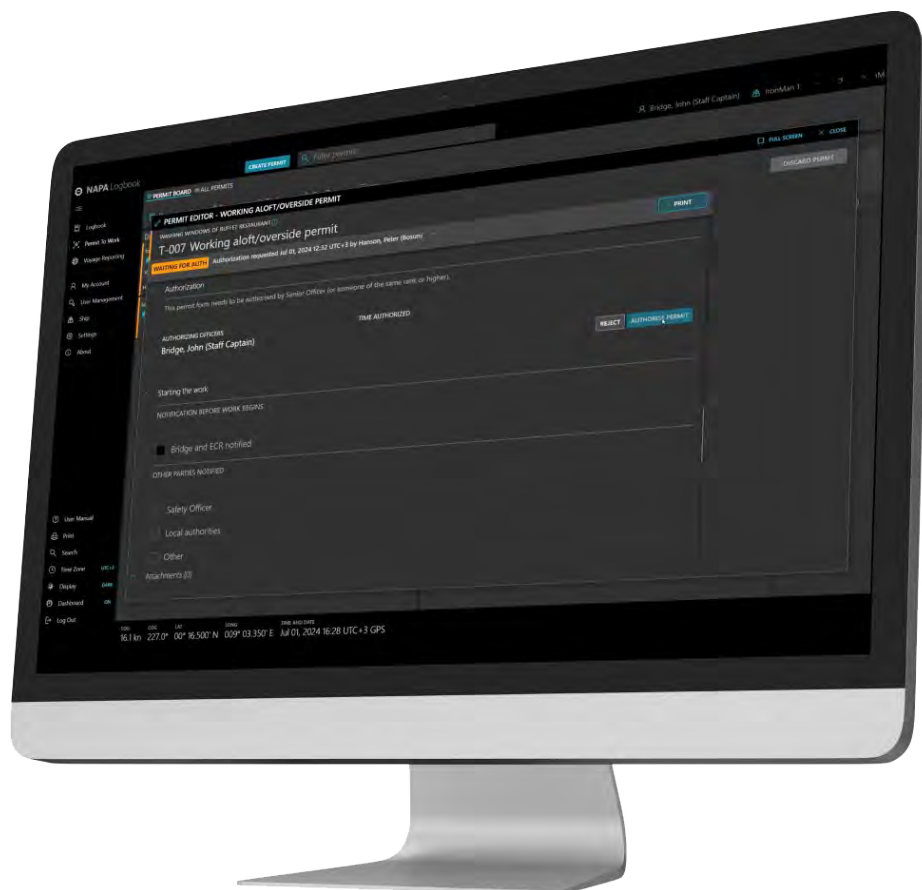
“So far we have mostly seen data be used to optimise ship routes and save fuel, but with the operational data collected across the NAPA portfolio, there is a new pool of potential applications to be explored,” he explains. “Shipowners can begin to explore new efficiencies and even build a foundation for new technology such as artificial intelligence.”

Before shipowners can begin to use this data, however, it is important for them to properly understand it.

“It’s important to look at the big picture so they can get a holistic view of the data before considering different possibilities for integrating it,” says Vihavainen.

“This way, they’re not just collecting and reporting data, but using it proactively to try and improve operations.

“One of the prerequisites for utilising AI tools is having a significant amount of clean data collected, and the data from different modules in the NAPA portfolio can create a solid data foundation to allow that to happen.” **CFR**



NAPA Permit to Work (top) digitalises the project approval process and can work with other solutions such as NAPA Logbook

The insider's solution

FerryHawk's Liz Hemmens explains to Alex Smith how it has used decades of experience as a ferry operator to develop a new booking system

For over 50 years, Hawkins Family Group has been operating a ferry to Australia's Moreton Island. The family company, now owned by Roz Shaw and run by her daughter and CEO Liz Hemmens, therefore has gained extensive experience with the many challenges operators face in delivering an efficient booking process.

After trying several booking solutions to streamline the process, Shaw and Hemmens decided to take matters into their own hands.

"We were hoping to get a solution off the shelf, as we thought our situation wouldn't be that unique," explains Hemmens. "But we had quite a few failed implementations. Instead, we decided to develop our own booking system."

FerryHawk, the booking system they created, was launched in 2018 following 18 months of development. Since then, the system has been continuously updated and upgraded.

"We have continued to iterate the application, refining it as we use it," says Hemmens. "Whenever we release a new functionality, we test it within our own business prior to releasing it to other iterations. As operators, we understand the reality of day-to-day operation and can develop solutions based on our experience, which makes us unique."

Today, FerryHawk provides a wide variety of features, including automated load calculation, customer communication tools, automated seasonal dynamic pricing and many more. The constant improvement of the platform is enabled by the company's flexible approach to development, says Hemmens.

"With the software-as-a-service model, we can release updates and features to



customers anywhere around the world," she says.

FerryHawk prioritised the long term by creating a configurable model as opposed to an individually customisable solution.

"We're not seeking to develop customised applications for every single operator because that would be inefficient," says Hemmens. "Customisation is time-consuming, and you end up with an incredibly complicated product that's difficult to update. If you can't modernise eight to 10 years later, you'll have to throw the system out again and get a new one."

FerryHawk aims to expand the well-tested system in future.

"We were the first operator to use the system and we've refined our platform to anticipate the challenges that other

"As operators, we understand the reality of day-to-day operation and can develop solutions based on our experience"

operators are having," says Hemmens. "We understand their pain points, because the things we do every day are very similar. We're not producing a system for other forms of transport, or even for other areas of the maritime industry; we're focused on meeting the unique challenges of passenger and vehicle ferry operators." **CFR**



Intelligent cruising

By Norman Schmiedl, COLUMBIA blue

AI is beginning to make an impact across the cruise industry, helping to deliver a safer, more efficient and more sustainable experience

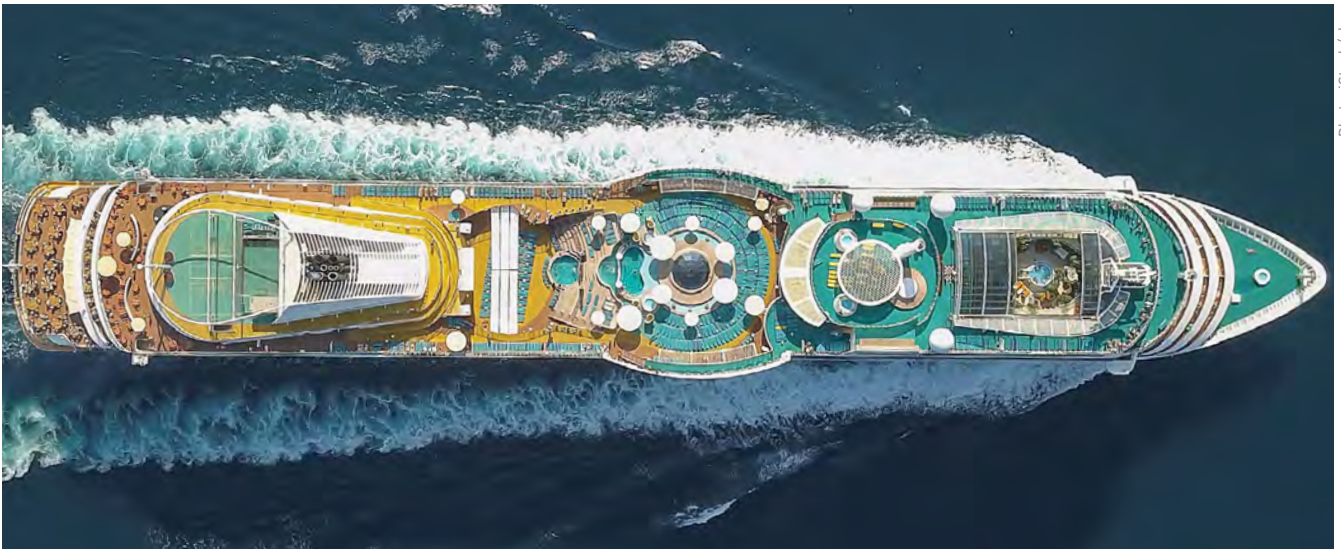


Photo: iStock/alzay

Artificial intelligence technology is emerging as a useful tool for the cruise industry, most notably in four key areas: recruitment, guest experience, sustainability, and safety.

In recruitment, we use AI mainly for sourcing and background checks when looking for potential crew members for roles where high-level skills and dedication are essential. We can also use it to determine if CVs are created with the help of AI because we want to be confident that the candidate is authentic. AI makes it possible for maritime recruiters to review large amounts of data while conducting these plausibility checks, and streamlining the initial review process to find the most relevant CVs and candidates for a popular position has tremendous benefits.

In addition, AI chatbots and virtual assistants can provide around-the-clock support to guests, answering questions,

making reservations and suggesting sightseeing options at port destinations. AI uses language processing and machine learning algorithms to anticipate an individual passenger's needs, helping to develop customer loyalty.

Sustainability is a concern for operators and guests alike and cruise lines are increasingly taking steps to reduce their environmental footprint. This includes the adoption of technologies like AI-powered smart sensors to reduce their emissions, conserve energy and manage waste efficiently. Smart sensors can also continuously monitor environmental parameters such as water and air quality.

As regulations continue to evolve, ship managers must remain proactive in maintaining efficiency and sustainability. Columbia Group has invested in digital solutions such as OneLink and EmissionLink to enhance efficiency in navigating these complex

regulatory landscapes, enabling us to offer our clients cost-effective and sustainable solutions.

Lastly, AI is playing a pivotal role in safety and ship operations. We must ensure that our personnel are thoroughly trained to utilise AI tools effectively, integrating human expertise with advanced technology. One example is Columbia Group's collaboration with SmartSea, which has been set up by IT provider SITA with the Columbia Group as the anchor client, to bring globally trusted transport technology and innovation to the maritime sector.

We see this era as an exciting time when we can use new AI technologies to support all the human interactions that make the cruise ship experience one of the most unique and pleasurable ways to travel. **CFR**

Norman Schmiedl is CEO of COLUMBIA blue



Putting health first

By Crystol Lasley, AP Companies

Pre-employment medical examinations are mandatory for crew members but it's essential to improve standards to better protect cruise lines and their employees

Every seafarer's employment journey begins with a pre-employment medical examination (PEME), which involves an assessment by a medical professional to determine if they are fit for duty on a cruise ship.

At AP Companies, we understand just how essential it is to complete a thorough PEME as it ensures the wellbeing of both the individual crew member, and their colleagues onboard. Unfortunately, a PEME is often seen simply as a formal requirement to tick boxes, rather than as an opportunity to adequately assess an individual's suitability for a specific position onboard a cruise ship.

This underestimation of the examination can be costly to the individual crew member, their colleagues and the cruise line. For example, should the individual have to disembark because of an unreported pre-existing condition, their tasks must be completed by remaining crew members, which increases their workloads and the probability of work-related stress and injury. In some cases, an inadequate or incomplete PEME can even endanger the crew member's life. Our thorough PEMEs significantly decrease this risk – one of our clients has experienced a 70 per cent reduction in disembarkations over the past three years.

AP Companies carries out thorough PEMEs and provides more data than a standard medical assessment to ensure the cruise line has all the necessary details to make an informed decision on every crew member it hires. This saves time and



Photo: AdobeStock/rocketclips

money, and ensures the crew onboard is as fit and healthy as possible.

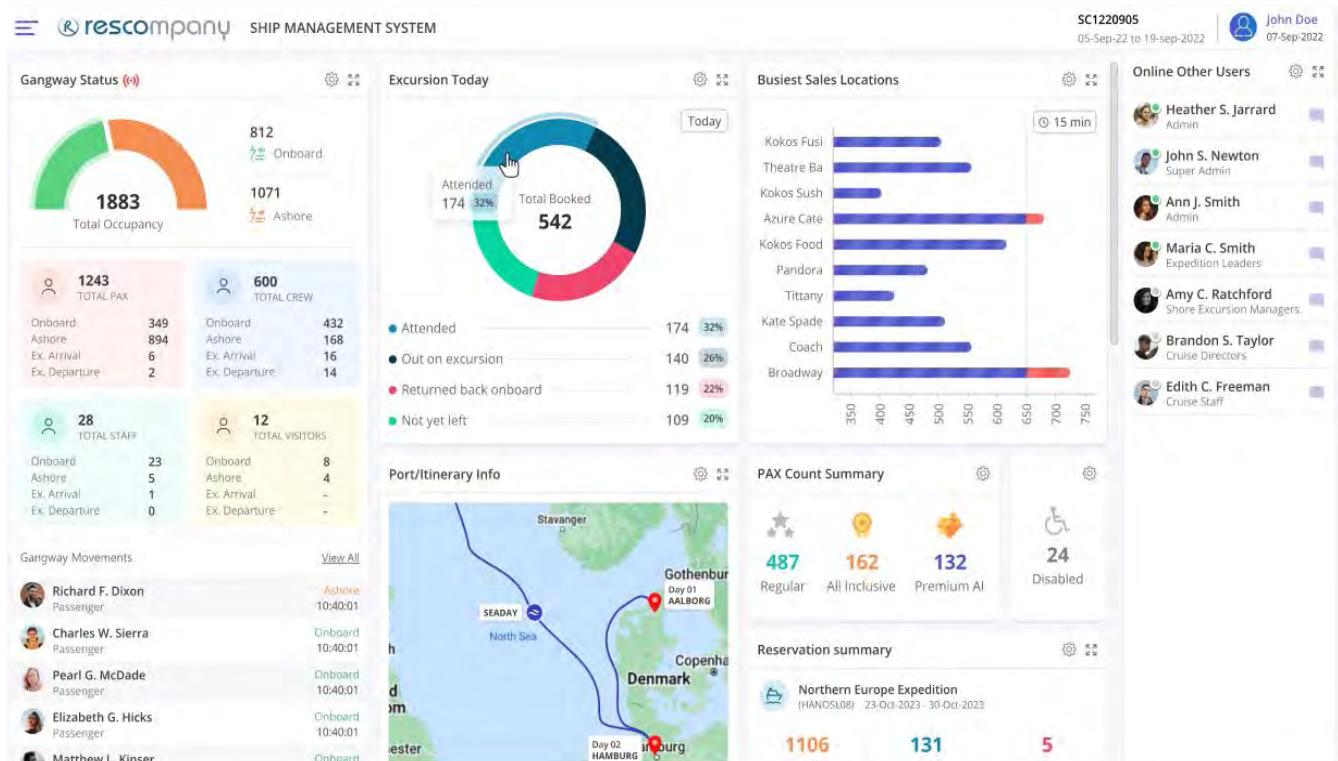
In future, several additional components should be considered for the existing PEME. Once such component is a thorough dental review because nearly 30 per cent of crew port-side medical appointments currently involve dental issues. It would also prove beneficial to include a comprehensive mental health questionnaire to determine suitability for a job at sea, as well as appropriate mental health support services for crew onboard.

In addition, the clinics performing PEMEs should be annually audited to ensure they are completing the assessments to an agreed standard. We, at AP Companies, have audited all the clinics we use to carry out PEMEs, as we believe upholding high standards will improve the health and wellbeing of cruise ship crew members across the world. **CFR**

Crystol Lasley is director of maritime medical operations at AP Companies

Sail smarter with a new pal

cruisePAL suite of solutions helps cruise companies to manage operations, monitor inventory and collect data



cruisePAL provides cruise companies with a suite of cloud-ready solutions to better manage operations

Web-based and cloud-ready, cruisePAL is a suite of solutions offering modern functionalities to the cruise industry for better operational efficiency and enhanced customer service.

The cruisePAL Ship Management System (SMS) and Point of Sale (POS) modules help users to manage onboard hotel operations, including reservations, checking guests in and out, and handling daily tasks.

cruisePAL POS can be used in bars, restaurants, boutiques, casinos, spas and concessionary outlets. It provides immediate sales visibility, supports discounts and fees. The accompanying POS management module facilitates

inventory deductions, product management and sales reporting. It allows for centralised setup and synchronisation of data between onboard and onshore systems. The historical data analysis functionality also helps to ensure optimal inventory management.

The inventory module is tailored to improve cruise lines' material flow, from sourcing to procurement across various stock items, such as food and beverage, uniforms and items in onboard boutiques. It also provides real-time POS updates and offers advanced demand planning and forecasting by using historical data for insights based on factors such as region and age group.

Another module is cruisePAL Central Supply Chain management, which synchronises data between the shore and the ship, making it easy to create products, adjust pricing and document inventory. The cruisePAL suite also offers a procurement module that automatically converts order requests into purchase orders based on competitive bids, streamlining the procurement cycle.

"Any cruise line can grow their business with confidence using cruisePAL scalable solutions," says Peter Winqvist, CEO of Rescompany. "With cruisePAL flexible deployment options and scalable architecture, they can easily expand the operations and accommodate future growth without disruption." **CFR**

FEATURED PARTNERS: MARINE OPERATIONS

A directory of businesses that provide products and services to support operational needs



AP Companies

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Founded in 1997, AP Companies is a renowned international medical assistance company specialising in emergency and planned medical treatment for crew members. As a global medical partner for major cruise lines and shipping companies, AP Companies ensures the wellbeing of crew members across the world. Its services include shoreside medical appointments, long-term home country medical treatment, biomed projects, pre-employment medical examinations, telemedicine, medical chest supply, evacuation and repatriation. With a robust medical network and strategically located offices, AP Companies provides a 360-degree approach to crew healthcare. AP Companies has a network of over 80,000 providers.

Medical



Bureau Veritas Marine & Offshore

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Bureau Veritas Marine & Offshore is one of the world's leading ship classification societies and offshore safety and verification bodies, with a global network to support clients worldwide.

Bureau Veritas Marine & Offshore understands the challenges clients face in designing, building and operating a sustainable maritime business. The company supports them with practical advice, tools and technology to run safe, sustainable and high performing businesses.

As Bureau Veritas Marine & Offshore is part of Bureau Veritas, a world leader in testing, inspection and certification services with over 82,000 employees in more than 1,600 locations, it has a truly global outlook, bringing a broader understanding of the global supply chain and blue economy.

Bureau Veritas Marine & Offshore's vision is to shape a better maritime world.

Classification



Cainby

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Cainby has been providing innovative maritime signage solutions for yards and ships for more than 50 years. It has worked with customers like Viking Line, Tallink Silja, Eckerö Group, Meyer Turku, Almaco, GNV, Foreship, Scanmarine, Paf and many more.

Cainby's focus on quality and efficiency makes it ideal for both small projects with a short delivery timeframe and larger projects. The team is competent in designing and producing digital, outdoor, indoor, illuminated, safety, wayfinding and other signage. It is also knowledgeable about specific materials for signage, the different kinds of prints and adhesives, safety regulations for ships, on-site installation requirements and how to provide support and service for all kinds of projects.

Safety signage



FarSounder

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Taking a passenger ship into an uncharted or poorly charted area is challenging – there may be icebergs, whales, lost shipping containers or storm debris in the water columns. To mitigate risks while travelling these challenging waters, companies must go beyond regulations and invest in equipment to ensure the safety of their vessels, passengers and crew.

FarSounder Argos navigation sonars have a range of up to 1,000 metres and provide a real-time image of the seabed and the water columns ahead of the cruise ship. The image is displayed in both a 3D omni view and a chart view, enabling the bridge crew to identify potential hazards and give them time to adjust course if necessary, so they can sail ahead with confidence. This allows cruise lines to access exclusive destinations easily.

Bridge equipment | Maps and charts



IRON Pump

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Water pumps play a vital role on cruise ships, whether in the heeling, sanitary or ventilation systems, emptying the bilges, cooling the main engines, or forming part of the installed scrubber system.

To ensure passenger safety and operational stability, cruise ships depend on high-quality pumps to do the job. For decades, owners have seen the value of products from IRON Pump based on the quality of the pumps and the 100 per cent genuine spare parts.

IRON Pump has supplied water pumps for the cruise industry since 1912, and today cruise ships and ferries continue to account for a major part of the IRON Pump business. All pumps are designed and manufactured in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Engine room | Water systems



Navimeteo

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Navimeteo's specialists provide validated and detailed port and site forecasts aligned with cruise and port operations. The company offers subscription-based marine weather forecasting and now-casting services designed primarily for the yachting, cruise, port and ferry sectors.

The marine weather forecasters are available 24/7 for consultations to support customers across the oceans worldwide, especially in critical weather situations.

Navimeteo also organises practical training courses on marine meteorology for mariners.

Bridge equipment | Maps and charts

FEATURED PARTNERS: MARINE OPERATIONS



SES

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SES aims to deliver amazing experiences everywhere on Earth by distributing the highest quality video content and providing seamless data connectivity services around the world. As a provider of global content and connectivity solutions, SES owns and operates a geosynchronous orbit fleet and medium earth orbit constellation of satellites, offering a combination of global coverage and high-performance services. By using its intelligent, cloud-enabled network, SES delivers high-quality connectivity solutions anywhere on land, at sea or in the air, and is a trusted partner to telecommunications companies, mobile network operators, governments, connectivity and cloud service providers, broadcasters, video platform operators and content owners around the world. The company is headquartered in Luxembourg and listed on the Paris and Luxembourg stock exchanges.

Communications | Technology



TecnoVeritas

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Portugal

Joana Chantre, Head of Marketing and
Communications
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www.tecnoveritas.net

Headquartered in Portugal, with a global reach and more than 30 years of experience, TecnoVeritas provides engineering solutions and services for the marine industry.

TecnoVeritas manufactures and supplies power and energy management solutions, which can be tailored to the needs of a client. The company also has a wide range of advanced engineering capabilities and services focused on energy, environmental and mechanical engineering.

Emissions reduction | Energy management | Engineering | Environmental and hygiene



Tower

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Tower is a trusted supplier to some of the biggest names in the cruise industry and is dedicated to delivering on-time and in-full. Its comprehensive range of products and solutions includes PPE, workwear and uniform for all areas of operations, including engine room, galley and bridge.

In addition, Tower provides for all non-food hospitality and hotel operations as well as hygiene and janitorial equipment and supplies, paper products, kitchenware, tableware, small appliances and cabin amenities.

Tower has developed long-term partnerships with clients who value the total cost of ownership, with a focus on innovation and sustainability, as well as working together to solve challenges, such as replacing single-use plastics, reducing cleaning chemicals and introducing more sustainable, ocean-friendly cleaning systems.

Environmental | Health and safety | Uniform/workwear



WMS

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www.wmsatsea.com

WMS is the premier global provider of wireless connectivity services, connecting people and business. WMS pioneered the first wireless network on a cruise ship 20 years ago and it remains the trusted strategic partner for connectivity in the most challenging and hard-to-reach places, for passengers, crew and onboard operations, delivering best in class technology, service and revenue growth for its clients. Passengers and crew of cruise and ferry lines rely on its hundreds of networks, its engineering expertise, its global roaming partners and its leading customer support to connect anywhere.

Communications | Technology

Cruise safety for passengers and crew

Safety is a key word for passengers and crew, regardless of the destination. State-of-the-art bilge pumps, cooling pumps, fire-fighting pumps and anti-heeling pumps supplied by IRON Pump constitute an extra safety guarantee, ensuring a pleasant cruise.

IRON Pump specialises in the manufacture of world-class marine pumps as well as pumps for the offshore and energy industry. We have more than 100 years of experience in constructing pumps.

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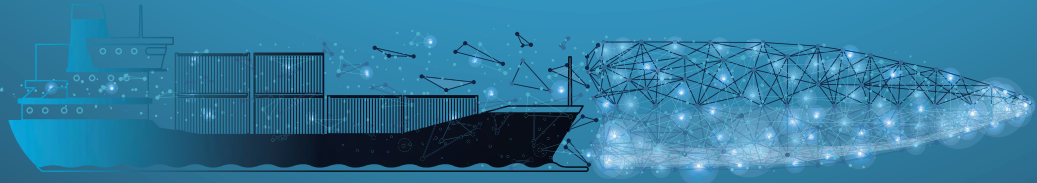
IRON Pump know the maritime market, we deliver swiftly, make long-lasting high quality products, and we never offer anything but customized products. For additional information, please visit our website or contact our Sales & Service staff.

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Timeless design

Passenger ship owners are demanding longer-lasting interiors. Alex Smith asks designers how they create spaces that will stand the test of time

When creating the interiors of a passenger ship, a designer faces a unique challenge. Each space they create onboard needs to appeal to a broad range of guests from different demographics and with different expectations, and then continue to do so for as long as possible over the ship's operating life without an expensive refurbishment being required.

As they look to meet this challenge, designers must therefore ask themselves a question: should they follow the latest trends to create a design that makes a big impact upon delivery, or should they take a more timeless approach to produce a space with greater longevity? For many, the choice is increasingly clear.

"While there remains a place for innovation and new ideas, astute

shipowners are increasingly demanding interiors that offer a longer-term return on investment," says Alan McVitty, design director of Key Interiors and Designs. "As a result, they are now favouring timeless elegance over transient trends, guided by formal design principles and culturally informed practitioners. This approach ensures that spaces are not only stylish but also enduring and durable."

But what defines a timeless interior design? My Nguyen, design director for Holland America Line and Seabourn Cruises, provides one explanation.

"I define timeless design as an experience where you walk into a space and there is no association to an era in time, but rather a feeling of comfort and calm," she says. "When you come back

to that space later, it still feels as fresh as when you were last there. The opposite of timeless design is when you walk into a space, and you think 'this is trendy now, but I'll be tired of it soon'."

Creating that sense of timelessness requires designers to balance shape, colour and texture, according to Nguyen. There should also be an element of personal style.

"Textures and colours that relate to nature are timeless because these elements have a direct link to human experiences," she says. "I also reflect on what I personally think of as timeless, such as Danish furniture from the 1950s and 1960s, or denim in fashion. The commonalities between these products are that they are good quality, comfortable, and texturally appealing regardless of



Photo: Cunard

Cunard's Golden Lion pub is decorated with banquette seating, brass finishes and artwork displaying a contemporary take on British culture

if you are a Boomer or from Gen Z. Making a timeless design is more about balancing wow factors with investments in longevity than including any one element. Each designer will have their own signature way to balance these elements, and that is what makes a design unique.”

Cunard looked back to the line’s own history as it looked to create a timeless appeal on its newest ship Queen Anne, says Lee Powell, the cruise line’s vice president of brand and product.

“We started at the beginning with our archives, the story and past of Cunard,” he says. “I wanted to bring a Cunard experience to life for 2024, but in a way that celebrated and told that story through design. For example, the Golden Lion, our onboard pub, has taken the quintessential British pub experience and elevated it. There are the brass finishes, green leather banquettes and stained-glass details, but then also elements such as a collection of contemporary artwork that demonstrates the eccentricity of Britishness too.”

Ship staterooms, however, should always be timeless, says Nguyen, not least because the design may need to be finalised up to four years before delivery.



Photo: Holland America Line

The suites on Holland America Line’s Rotterdam feature neutral colour palettes, as well as furnishings with a mixture of textures and patterns to ensure they are timeless

“Since cabins are built as modular units and take up a large percentage of the ship real estate, cabin units are one of the first designs to be produced,” she explains. “The design also needs to last at least seven years in operation before the renovation cycle takes place. Therefore, the design vision for the staterooms of Holland America Line’s Rotterdam was to mix texture and pattern while

keeping the colour palette light and natural. We combined graphics with floral patterns, since those are timeless elements that you see in nature. Our goal was to have a guest’s first impression be that their accommodation is comfortable, sophisticated and timeless regardless of whether they came onboard during the inaugural voyage or five years from now.” **CFR**

Aros Marine

In spring 2023, Aros Marine refurbished Hurtigruten’s Trollfjord, with the Rost restaurant being one of the main spaces the team worked on. The month-long project involved around 150 workers and embraced a design ethos that balances heritage with modernity. Rost’s interior, crafted by YSA Design, features timeless Nordic aesthetics with clean lines, natural materials and subtle colour palettes inspired by Norwegian landscapes. The use of wood, stone and sustainable materials ensures durability, while reupholstering existing furniture honoured the ship’s 130-year legacy. This design creates a warm, elegant atmosphere that is both contemporary and enduring, reflecting Hurtigruten’s commitment to cultural and environmental sustainability.



FEATURE

MJM Marine

A timeless product or space transcends fleeting trends, offering enduring appeal through classic design, functionality and quality craftsmanship. Royal Caribbean International's cruise ship Utopia of the Seas, with interiors designed and crafted by MJM Marine, exemplifies this. It embodies the essence of timeless design, with the Royal Railway and Pesky Parrot bar. The meticulous attention to detail and use of high-quality materials ensures spaces are both elegant and resilient. The ship's blend of modern luxury with classic aesthetics ensures it remains captivating to passengers, regardless of changing trends. MJM Marine's work onboard reflects a commitment to creating environments that offer lasting comfort and quiet luxury, adding to its portfolio of high-quality fitouts.



Partner Ship Design

Timeless design is based on delivering functionality in combination with form and colours in harmony.

Instead of following fashion trends, timeless design emphasises elements inspired by nature, and showcases well-considered design down to the smallest details, such as coordinated lighting and well-balanced proportions.

At Partner Ship Design, we are convinced that timeless design can, but does not have to, speak a soft design language with moderate and calm colours. Investing in quality workmanship, materials, furniture and accessories ensures that the space remains appealing for many years. As a result, timeless interior design always stays relevant and up to date.

SMC Design

At SMC Design, timeless design has been implemented for many different brands. The team creates a unique individual style specific to each brand that differentiates and defines the guests' experience, producing a familiarity which meets their expectations. The brands and their designs are incredibly different and yet they all have everlasting appeal.

To create a design that stands the test of time there must be a synergy, with all aspects existing in harmony to collectively create a considered and correct design. An award-winning example of this is the Masters of the Sea pub for MSC Cruises' MSC World Europa, which has resulted in a design that is authentic, exciting and, most importantly, timeless.





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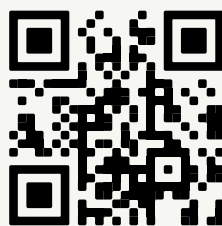
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FEATURE

Tihany Design

For a design to retain its relevance over time, it must be based on cultural references and create emotional connections for those using the space. Strong storytelling that delves into meaningful references is essential for achieving a timeless result. A timeless design balances appreciation across various cultures by distilling cultural elements to their essence and making them universally understandable. Seabourn Venture and Seabourn Pursuit exemplify such strong designs. Their lasting appeal stems from the inception of the idea and the inspiration behind the aesthetic, ensuring their timelessness.



Tomas Tillberg Design

Passenger ship operators are increasingly favouring interior designs that emphasise timelessness over fleeting contemporary trends. They seek long-term value in their investments while continuing to follow formal design principles. While there is still room for new ideas and innovation, the focus is on achieving lasting appeal. This approach is driven by astute owners who demand enduring payoffs for their interior expenditures. Our designs, such as onboard the Aurora Expeditions' ship Douglas Mawson, demonstrate the insights of our designers and showcase products that adhere to a timeless design philosophy, balancing tradition and innovation to create spaces that remain relevant and elegant over time.

YSA Design

Timeless design endures because its functionality and aesthetic appeal outlast the whims of fashion. Distinguished by simplicity, clean lines, high quality and craftsmanship, timeless designs serve practicality, harmony and versatility, and favour understated elegance and cultural neutrality over ostentation and stereotyping.

Conceived by YSA Design, Hudson's restaurant on Norwegian Cruise Line's Norwegian Prima embodies timeless design. A venue with a unique personality for a first-in-class vessel, Hudson's combines the flair of the modern, luxury dining experience with an enduring low-key elegance. Strong in concept, clear in vision and executed with excellence, Hudson's upmarket appeal will last for years to come.



Entering a new era

Greg Walton of Studio DADO explains to Rebecca Gibson how investing in the right people and prioritising client-centric design is helping the design firm to win new projects and expand its business



Originally trained as a therapy dog to bring comfort to hospice patients and the elderly, Enzo the Italian greyhound is now a familiar sight in cruise lines' board rooms, at shipyards, onboard cruise ships and at industry events.

"Enzo has become somewhat of a celebrity in the cruise world and people are always disappointed if I turn up without him!" says Greg Walton, his owner. "He's made friends with many people in the industry and given us lots of funny moments."

Enzo has also become the mascot of Miami-based design firm Studio DADO, which was co-founded by Walton, Javier Calle, Jorge Mesa and Yohandel Ruiz in November 2016. The firm has quickly established a reputation for designing bespoke, luxury guest accommodation, dining and entertainment venues for cruise ships.

"We've delivered designs for some of the world's most luxurious cruise ships," says Walton. "We've also had consecutive years of growth and

"Enzo has become somewhat of a celebrity in the cruise world and people are always disappointed if I turn up without him!"

profitability, survived a pandemic and we're on track to achieve record financial revenue in 2024. When we started the firm, I never imagined that we would accomplish so much in a such a short space of time."

Walton attributes this success to the hard work and determination of the Studio DADO team, explaining that every individual is dedicated to pushing

design boundaries and delivering the best possible service to clients.

“Our goal is to create extraordinary experiences for guests, so we always remain curious, never stop asking questions and relentlessly pursue design innovation,” he says. “We’ve hired very selectively to build the most skilled, creative and dedicated team in the design industry. This has enabled us to partner with leading cruise brands and develop an extensive project portfolio.”

Studio DADO has completed three major cruise ship projects in the past 12 months – Norwegian Cruise Line’s Norwegian Viva, Oceania Cruises’ Oceania Vista and Regent Seven Seas Cruises’ Seven Seas Grandeur. These vessels have showcased the firm’s ability to design immersive and innovative spaces to new audiences.

“We’ve been approached by other cruise brands who are impressed by our work on these ships and are interested in working with us to create interiors that will attract a new demographic of guests to their own vessels,” says Walton. “We’ve also won contracts with well-known hotel companies that want us to take the lessons we’ve learned from designing spaces for cruise ships and translate them into bespoke high-end interiors in their land-based properties.”

According to Walton, the increase in cruise contracts and diversification into land-based design marks a new phase for Studio DADO.

“The firm is transforming from a start-up into a corporation, and we’re making several investments to support this growth,” says Walton. “We’ve doubled our physical office space in Miami to facilitate better collaboration and accommodate our team as it continues to expand. We’ve also promoted some of our current employees and, in a big leap for the company, we’ve hired our first chief operating officer, Eduardo de Jesus. He will oversee the day-to-day management of the company and help us to build the administrative infrastructure we need to work more efficiently and

facilitate future growth. This will free up our leadership team to focus on client development and design direction.”

In addition, Studio DADO has hired its first Europe-based team member. “He will be based in Italy and doing everything from helping us with design production to reviewing workshop drawings, inspecting mock-ups, meeting with shipyard teams in person and going onboard vessels during the construction and outfitting stages,” says Walton. “Having a physical presence in Europe will help us to resolve any issues quickly during projects, which will benefit both us and our clients. It will also strengthen our partnerships with the shipyards and other key stakeholders in the supply chain.”

Walton is confident that Studio DADO’s ongoing investments will drive its future success, which he says reassures him as he prepares to start a new chapter of his own.

“I’ll be retiring at the end of this year,” he says. “Studio DADO is thriving, my spouse is embarking on a new journey in his career, Enzo is getting older, and I have a long list of places I want to see and things I want to do while I’m still sufficiently young and healthy to fully enjoy them. All the stars have aligned and now is the right time for me to step aside. Yohandel, Javier and Jorge have always had a clear vision for Studio DADO’s future, and I can’t wait to see them reach new heights.” **CFR**



Photo: Christian Santiago Photography

The Penrose Atrium onboard Norwegian Prima is just one of the many impressive spaces Studio DADO has designed in the past eight years

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Creating space

By Malvina Guarnieri, Tillberg Design of Sweden

Developing a general arrangement plan for a cruise ship is a process that requires a careful balance between creativity and technical expertise

The development of a general arrangement (GA), the drawing that shows how all the spaces onboard a ship are laid out, is a collaborative process which involves the owner, the yard, the designer and the naval architect. From a designer's perspective it is a fundamentally creative process, though you are required to stay within certain boundaries, such as maximum gross tonnage, length and width.

To prepare to create a GA, I never stop studying. I am lucky enough to be part not only of Tillberg Design of Sweden, but also the wider Viken Group, and our merged portfolio means we have great knowledge in-house. We collect ship data and examine market trends to identify what is working well. We are also researching architectural developments and the impact they could have on guests.

At the start of the process, we begin by locating areas quite freely within the ship, focusing on the experience for the guests onboard and the architectural features and key areas we're creating. Understanding sight lines is crucial: when a guest boards, what's the first thing they see? What about the flow to their cabin or suite? And what about the sight lines in the public areas?

Even if in this stage of the process a GA is often presented in a 2D medium, we are thinking holistically. We imagine guest experience, areas of activity and of retreat, trying to immerse ourselves in how a space will be perceived by guests and crew by visualising volumes and spaces.

Lately, I have been investigating environmental psychology factors which can impact master planning, examining



Malvina Guarnieri sketching a general arrangement plan for a cruise ship

interactions between individuals and surrounding environment. By carefully designing the location and size of each public area, you can help a guest easily navigate a ship and create a sense of exploration. An intuitively designed ship helps stop them from feeling lost, as they understand where their cabin is and where the public areas are.

We always keep in mind the targeted number of cabins and suites. It's important

to validate that each square metre of space allocated to an area is valuable – we don't want any wasted space onboard!

I am fascinated by the process of creating a GA. It is about breaking rules, inventing new areas and features and creating flow, all within the boundaries of an engineered and feasible platform. **CFR**

Malvina Guarnieri is a design director for Tillberg Design of Sweden

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With years of experience in the business, Abbiati Casino Equipment is bringing its custom-made casino equipment to ships in the Virgin Voyages fleet



Abbiati Casino Equipment has manufactured a range of custom gaming tables for Virgin Voyages

Abbiati Casino Equipment has manufactured and supplied casino equipment for use in live table gaming for over 40 years.

Based in Turin, Italy, the firm has built a reputation for high-quality products and services and has established an international client base across the global cruise and ferry markets.

Since 2019, Abbiati has developed a close relationship with Virgin Voyages. It is the sole supplier of live table gaming equipment to the cruise line and has provided customised equipment to the four Virgin Voyages ships built at the Fincantieri shipyard in Italy: Scarlet Lady, Valiant Lady, Resilient Lady and Brilliant Lady.

“We chose Abbiati as our partner as we know the high quality of its products and

its overall professionalism,” says Colin Hughes, director of fleet experience and onboard relations at Virgin Voyages. “This has been proven over the past five years, and we continue to have a great working relationship with the Abbiati team.”

Some of the equipment that Abbiati has manufactured and supplied for Virgin Voyages includes customised high-specification tables for games such as roulette and cards, roulette wheels and displays, and personalised playing cards. All the equipment is installed by the Abbiati technical team.

Abbiati has also supplied gaming chips that feature phase jitter modulation radio-frequency identification (PJM RFID) technology, which allows greater visibility of chip movement and improves

verification and security. It has also undertaken the installation of all the hardware and software for the PJM RFID solution, including the Perfect Counter application for the cash desk.

“The Virgin Voyages brand is well-known across the world for its desire to change business for good, and to provide unique and exceptional customer experiences,”

says Giorgio Abbiati, CEO of Abbiati Casino Equipment. “Abbiati has similar aspirations and is proud to be a supplier to Virgin Voyages on its mission to create the world’s most irresistible travel brand.” **CFR**



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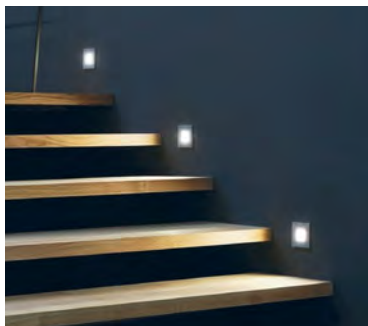


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Contemporary cruising by design

SMC Design's Oliver Raine shares his vision for NYK Cruises' first ship in over 30 years with Alex Smith as the company enters the final stages of the five-year project

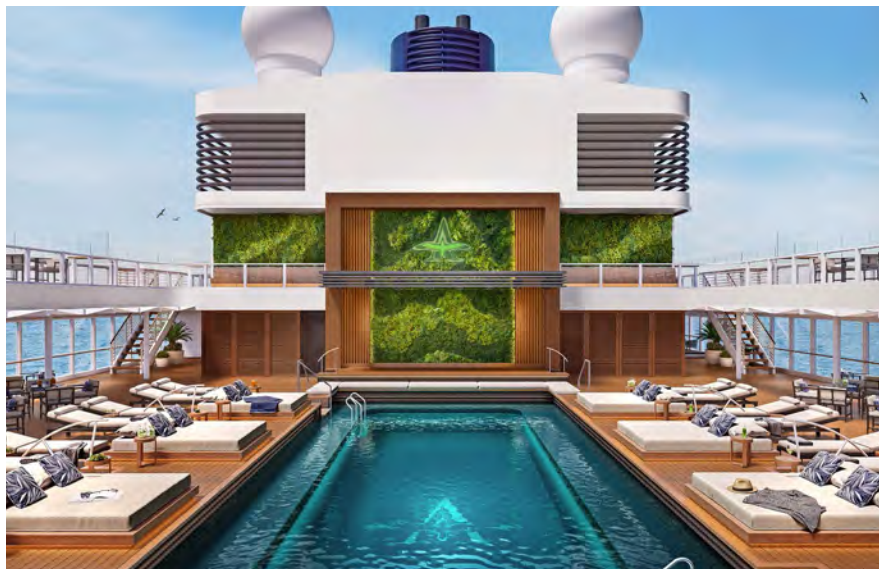
From the summer of 2025, NYK Cruises' 385-cabin Asuka III is scheduled to set sail along the coasts of Japan and embark on voyages exploring destinations further afield. The new vessel has been designed by London-based studio SMC Design, to attract a wide range of guests.

"Asuka III is designed to appeal to experienced guests and those new to cruising," explains Oliver Raine, senior designer and project manager for SMC Design. "NYK Cruises wanted an interior that felt fresh and inviting, but with an international appeal."

A long-standing relationship between SMC managing director Andy Yuill and NYK Cruises laid the groundwork for the partnership to create a contemporary interpretation of cruising. The team focused on creating destinations within the ship, so that every environment – whether lounge, restaurant, suite, or pool – would feel welcoming.

"Each space has a unique identity," says Oliver. "The finishes may be rich and atmospheric in a restaurant, yet light and cosy in the library, but key motifs are reflected throughout all areas of the residential-style design, from architecture to the wayfinding and signage."

The Asuka period of Japanese creative history influenced SMC's design aesthetic across the interior and exterior, with themes and colours inspired by Man'yōshū poetry from this time. Textured timber finishes, elegant marbles and subtle accents in Kokihanada blue and Aokin bluish gold greet guests from the moment they step onboard, building their relationship with the Asuka brand.



The design for Asuka III has been influenced by the themes and colours of Man'yōshū poetry

"The materials do the work," says Oliver. "The ship's architectural geometry is softened by the contemporary furniture and layers of light that enhance the materiality."

Spanning three decks, specially commissioned artwork by Japanese artist Kazumi Murose forms the centrepiece of Asuka III, with the atrium's asymmetric design creating multiple viewing areas.

"The cantilevered glass staircase has been designed to work in harmony with the artwork," says Oliver.

Though he mentions the outdoor pool area, atrium, cabins and suites as particularly appealing spaces onboard the ship, Oliver's favourite design is one of the individual restaurants.

"The Al Mare restaurant is the most progressive space in contemporary design terms – distinctive and moody, it captures an atmosphere that's both intimate and cool," he says. "Combining the client brief with our team's talent has created a space that – for me – represents the essence of Asuka III." **CFR**



"The ship's architectural geometry is softened by the contemporary furniture and layers of light that enhance the materiality"

A feast on the waves

Jason Worth of Oceania Cruises talks with Alex Smith about the cruise brand's focus on food and how it plans to refresh its culinary offering



Photo: Oceania Cruises

A new sushi station at Terrace Café is among the additions being made as part of the 'Relaxed Yet Refined' initiative



“We’re very excited to take what we’ve learned with Vista and deliver a great experience on Allura”

Food is at the heart of the Oceania Cruises experience. The cruise line employs one chef for every 10 guests onboard its seven luxury ships, with a variety of different cuisines on offer on each vessel at their selection of complimentary speciality restaurants.

“When the brand began over 21 years ago, it was founded by foodies as a foodie cruise experience,” says Jason Worth, vice president of international sales for Oceania Cruises. “It’s a pillar of our brand, and we’ve done some revolutionary things in our dining experience. Our O-class ships Marina and Riviera were the first in the cruise industry to have culinary schools, something we’ve continued with our latest ships Vista and Allura.”

Guests have grown to have high expectations of “the finest cuisine at

sea”, says Worth, and the cruise line has looked to keep delivering on those standards with new experiences.

“To keep things fresh and inventive, we’ve introduced a number of new onboard offerings,” he says. “We added our pan-Asian restaurant Red Ginger onboard Marina, Riviera, Sirena and our Allura-class vessels. On our new ship Vista, we launched Ember, an American dining venue, and Aquamar Kitchen, which offers a healthier option inspired by our Aquamar Spa. Aquamar has also now been introduced onboard Marina following a recent refurbishment.”

A recent initiative has been the introduction of ‘Relaxed Yet Refined’ venues across the fleet, which offer a more casual dining experience than Oceania’s speciality restaurants. A sushi station offering 45 new recipes will be



Red Ginger, Oceania's pan-Asian restaurant, has been introduced onboard Marina, Riviera, Sirena and Vista

added to Terrace Café, along with an Indian Corner that will operate once every cruise during dinner service. Pizza, cooked fresh in a brick oven at Waves Grill, will also be available.

"We've seen a trend in the last few years that guests want to sail for longer," says Worth. "But on those longer voyages, they may not want a three-hour, multi-course dinner every night in our Grand Dining Room or restaurants, especially after a busy day onshore. Our 'Relaxed Yet Refined' options allow them to relax with a glass of wine out on the pool deck and enjoy alfresco dining at its best."

The 'Relaxed Yet Refined' initiative comes in the wake of the appointment of chefs Alexis Quaretti and Eric Barale as executive culinary directors in March 2024, succeeding Jacques Pepin. Quaretti

and Barale are conducting a review of the culinary offering across Oceania's fleet, with more changes yet to come.

"Chefs Alex and Eric have more surprises to share before the end of the year," says Worth. "Their review is taking a thorough look at all the venue items across the ships. There are exciting plans ahead for all of our fleet."

As well as receiving a refreshed culinary offering, Oceania's fleet is also set to welcome a new addition in 2025. Allura, the second ship in the cruise line's Allura-class, is scheduled to begin sailing from 18 July following its delivery by shipbuilder Fincantieri. While it will largely mirror its sister ship, Vista, Allura will include several changes based on guest feedback.

"We're very excited to take what we've learned with Vista and deliver a great

experience on Allura when we welcome her to the fleet," says Worth. "We're adding a creperie serving ice cream, waffles, and other indulgent menu items. We've also moved the library down closer to the Horizons area, which is a bit quieter and off the beaten path."

Allura will have capacity for up to 1,200 guests and Worth believes the generally small size of the Oceania fleet provides a unique experience.

"I've sailed on a number of cruises over the years and in general it's a great way to see the world," he says. "But I love our small ships in particular. There's no line to wait in, beautiful food made to a high standard, and they represent incomparable value. You know you're going to have a great time, enjoy wonderful dining experiences and find yourself coming back for more." **CFR**



Spoilt for choice

By Jemma Masters, Forbo Flooring Systems

Forbo Flooring Systems provides the maritime industry with various flooring solutions that can be customised to match any environment onboard passenger ships

Choice is about possibilities, and in design, choice starts with colour. Colour has the power to communicate a message, evoke emotions, create associations and affect the mood of an interior space onboard a passenger ship.

Forbo Flooring Systems is helping its customers to create unique marine interiors for cruise ships, ferries and more, whilst also ensuring high quality, durability and aesthetic appeal, with its Flotex Vision FR floor covering.

Flotex Vision FR is a unique, textile flocked floor covering that is designed to combine the hygienic qualities and durability of a resilient flooring product with the comfort, slip resistance and acoustic properties usually associated with textiles.

Customers can choose from a pre-existing library of designs with more than 600 references and the flooring can also be custom-designed to meet their unique visions and interior design requirements. For example, designs can be recoloured to match physical samples, as well as the full spectrum of RAL, Natural Colour System or Pantone colours.

Furthermore, because Flotex Vision FR is a high-density textile, we can use our high-definition printing technology to print all types of high-resolution designs, from vibrant colourways to wood effects, allowing customers to create flooring that perfectly matches their vision.

Forbo also has a team of experienced designers that can help at any stage in the design process. They can help customers with ideas, recolouring Forbo's existing

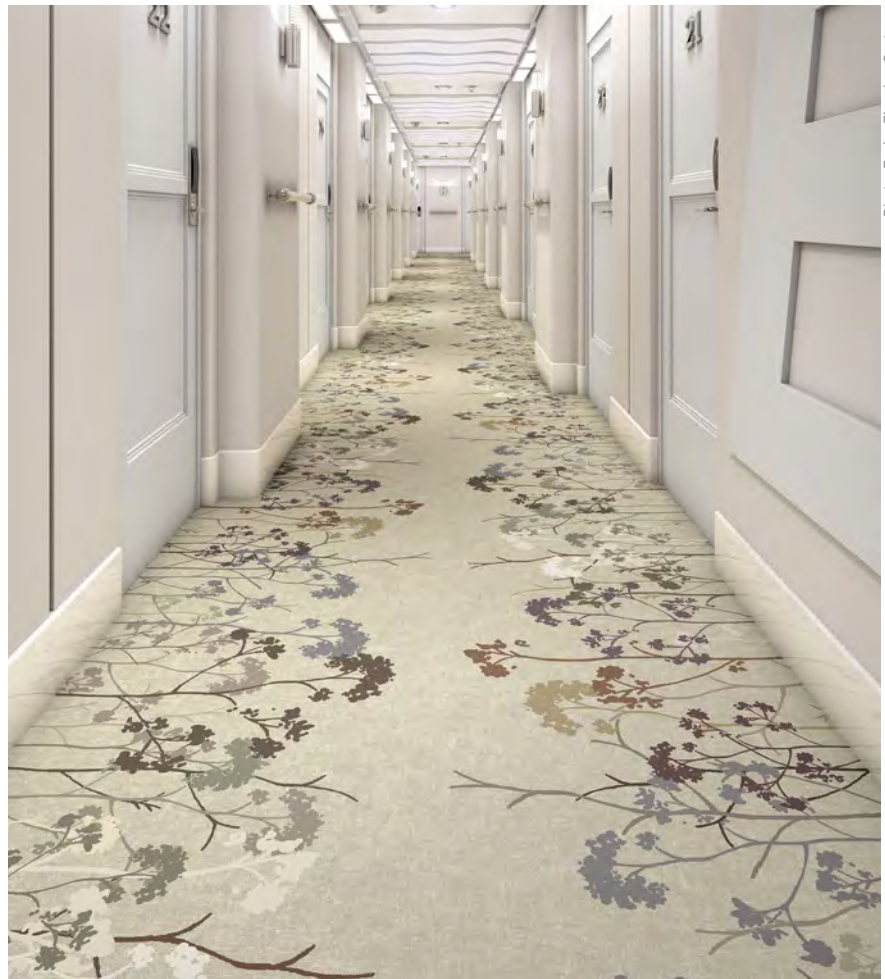


Photo: Forbo Flooring Systems

Flotex Vision FR can be thoroughly wet cleaned making it suitable for public spaces onboard ships

designs or developing a complete custom design that integrates perfectly with the interior design of the vessel.

In addition to its customisability, Flotex Vision FR is suitable for use onboard cruise ships and other types of vessels because it is a lightweight solution with a velour-like surface that is

comfortable and warm underfoot but can also be easily cleaned and maintained.

The flooring has a dense surface pile, upright nylon fibres and an impermeable PVC backing, meaning that it can be thoroughly wet cleaned down to its base. This means both water-soluble and grease stains can be removed easily

with standard cleaning equipment, saving costs and reducing the need to use as many chemical products. It is also designed to be quick drying, so that ship spaces can be maintained with minimal guest disruption.

“Customers can choose from a pre-existing library of designs with more than 600 references”

There are additional benefits for passengers too. Flotex Vision FR was awarded the Allergy UK Seal of Approval, meaning it has been proven to reduce allergens and improve indoor air quality.

In addition to Flotex Vision FR, Forbo also offers Coral Marine FR, a collection of functional textile entrance systems. The floorings are designed to prevent dirt and moisture from outside being tracked into the vessel. This helps to reduce wear and tear on interior floor coverings and decrease slip hazards.

Coral Marine FR is also colour customisable. Inset logos can be incorporated into the entrance flooring so that every guest who enters the ship will be immediately greeted by recognisable statement branding. There are eight colourways that are stocked for quick delivery.

At Forbo, we understand the importance of helping shipowners to create customised interior design solutions for their cruise ships, ferries, river boats and other marine vessels. With both Flotex Vision FR and Coral Marine FR, we aim to provide our customers with hardwearing, practical, high-performance and cost-effective flooring products, while giving them unparalleled creative freedom to bring their design visions to life. **CFR**

Jemma Masters is international key accounts marketing manager at Forbo Flooring Systems

Photos: Forbo Flooring Systems



Forbo's team of experienced designers can help create the perfect interior space, including printed wood effects that still provide the benefits of a textile floor covering

Sustainable ports

With the maritime industry making a concentrated effort to reach environmental sustainability goals, Amber Hickman looks at some of the ports around the world changing for a greener future

There are not many years until the International Maritime Organization's 2030 checkpoint for greenhouse gas emissions. The aim is to reduce annual emissions from international shipping by 30 per cent by 2030 to ensure the sector remains on track to reach zero emissions by 2050.

To achieve this, the maritime industry is working hard to make improvements that reduce its impact on the environment. Cruise lines are investing in various solutions and initiatives, such as alternative fuels, eco-friendly technology, advanced wastewater treatment systems and equipping their ships with shore power capabilities. For

example, MSC Cruises made 44 shore power connections at eight ports in 2023, but is aiming to increase this to 220 connections by the end of 2024. Meanwhile, Royal Caribbean Group is continuing to retrofit its ships with shore power capabilities, with 30 of them upgraded to date, and Carnival Corporation has now provided 64 per cent of its fleet with shore power capabilities, an increase from 57 per cent in 2022. Furthermore, Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings is currently on track to meet its goal of having 70 per cent of its fleet equipped with shore power technology, having already met its 2024 goal of 50 per cent.

To accommodate these ships, ports are making changes to their infrastructure too. The Port of Seattle in Washington, USA, for instance, is currently working towards electrifying its third and final berth so that it can provide shore power to all visiting cruise ships. Furthermore, PortMiami in Florida, USA, completed its Shore Power Program at the end of 2023, enabling it to offer shore power at five cruise terminals.

In the following pages, we highlight some of the other ports around the world that are making changes to improve not only their environmental sustainability, but the ecological impact of the ships that visit them too. **CFR**

Port of Dover, UK

As part of the UK's drive to reach net-zero shipping by 2050, the Port of Dover is rapidly progressing towards decarbonising the route across the English Channel, the world's busiest maritime corridor. It has already reduced its carbon emissions by 96 per cent (as of 2023) since 2007 and is aiming to become the first UK port to be carbon net zero for Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2025, and Scope 3 emissions by 2030.

As an additional initiative to encourage green operations, the port also gives the Port of Dover SEA (Safety and Environment Awareness) Award to visiting cruise lines with the best recycling methods, waste segregation, carbon emissions and safety procedures.



Portsmouth International Port, UK

Portsmouth International Port aims to be carbon net neutral by 2030, and one of the UK's first zero-emissions ports by 2050. Key to this bold ambition is Sea Change, a UK Government-funded, multi-user, multi-berth and multi-frequency shore power system, which will be a national first. The system will launch in 2025 and will enable customers to reduce emissions at berth and improve air quality for Portsmouth residents. Alongside this and other projects, the port also boasts a new terminal building which generates more energy than it consumes thanks to a modern solar and battery system.



Copenhagen, Denmark

In May 2024, construction of shore power facilities began at the Ocean Quay cruise pier in Copenhagen, Denmark. The project follows the completion of the previous shore power installation in Aarhus, Denmark's second-largest city, in 2023. The facility is expected to be operational by 2025 and fully functional by 2028, and it will be one of the largest shore power facilities in Europe. Copenhagen and Aarhus will benefit from cleaner air, and cruise lines and their passengers will be able to reduce their environmental impact when travelling to Denmark and the Baltic Sea.

Port of Le Havre, France

At the Port of Le Havre, the Pointe de Floride development project is continuing to progress. This summer, Le Havre Seine-Metropole began the construction of the three new cruise terminals, which will be able to host zero-emission port calls. The buildings will feature photovoltaic roofs and promote energy-efficient operations.

Haropa Port has also started work to implement shore power at the terminals. Quay Pierre Callet, Quay Roger Meunier and Quay Joannes Couvert are scheduled to be completed by February 2025, December 2025 and December 2026, respectively.



FEATURE

Canary Islands

Global Ports Holding is building sustainable cruise terminals in Las Palmas, Fuerteventura, and Lanzarote Cruise Ports with the aim of increasing tourism and economic development in a sustainable way that maintains a minimal ecological footprint. The cruise terminals are being constructed with recycled and eco-friendly materials to minimise waste and preserve natural resources. Furthermore, they will feature functional designs that facilitate the use of solar energy and efficient waste management.



The planned cruise terminal in for Las Palmas Cruise Port



Tarragona Cruise Port, Spain

The new Tarragona Cruise Port terminal, operated by Global Ports Holding, was built with sustainability in mind. The 2,200-square-metre terminal was built using an industrialised modular construction approach, which cut waste during build by 50 per cent and carbon emissions by 60 per cent, with a further 30 per cent reduction in emissions expected during operation. This method also decreases water consumption and energy use for air conditioning. The terminal features 42 solar panels, LED lighting and advanced safety measures, ensuring eco-efficiency and passenger comfort. Additionally, the Port Authority of Tarragona is studying the implementation of shore power to further reduce emissions and promote green energy use.

Kaohsiung Port Cruise Terminal, Taiwan

Kaohsiung Port Cruise Terminal is Taiwan's only sustainable green building designed with a full 3D curved surface curtain wall. Its streamlined shape resembles a whale leaping out of the water and combines energy efficiency with natural ventilation and day light. It was designed to represent the sustainable and forward-thinking outlook of the cruise industry.

The design of the terminal has won the Taiwan government's Public Construction Commission Golden Quality Award and recognition with a silver-class green building candidate certificate. It not only showcases the beauty of Taiwan's architectural craftsmanship to the world but also highlights the country's use of technology and pursuit of environmental sustainability.





Cyril B. Romney Tortola Pier Park, British Virgin Islands

Tortola Pier Park has joined the Green Globe certification programme as part of its dedication to environmental sustainability and responsible tourism. Green Globe is a certification programme for the travel and tourism industry that ensures adherence to high standards of economic, social and environmental sustainability. This membership marks the start of a journey towards continuous improvement and accountability in sustainable operations. Some of the initiatives that the port is undertaking includes, but is not limited to, the upcoming launch of the territory's first public photovoltaic charging system for electric cars in support of its clean energy transition.

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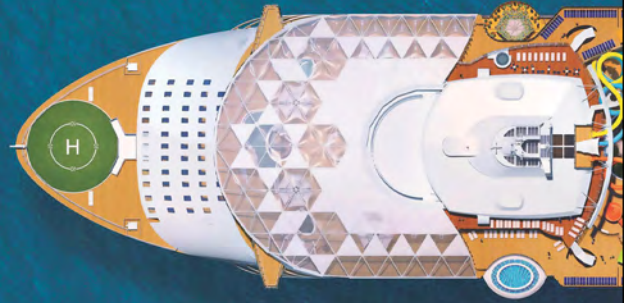
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Powering ahead

The Port of Seattle is working to electrify its third and final cruise berth, six years ahead of its 2030 target



Photo: Port of Seattle

The 1,800-metre-long cable was laid across Elliott Bay in one day

The Port of Seattle in Washington, USA, aims to be carbon neutral by 2050 and reduce emissions from cruise operations by 80 per cent in that time.

It was the first homeport in North America to offer shore power at two cruise berths, and it has provided the service at Pier 91 since 2009. As of the 2023 cruise season, 72 per cent of visiting ships were equipped to plug in.

The port is now undertaking the task of electrifying its third and final terminal at Pier 66, allowing it to meet the goal of having all cruise berths electrified six years before the 2030 target established by the Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy.

When planning the project, the port wanted to avoid the construction work causing disruption to the waterfront. Therefore, it found an innovative solution: a 1,800-metre-long extension cable that could run along the bottom of Elliott Bay, allowing Pier 66 to connect to the Seattle City Light power supply at Terminal 46.

There were three key stages to the project. First, work had to be carried out at Terminal 46 to extend the power supply and connect it to the cable that would run along the sea floor. Workers dug a trench measuring just over 900 metres long to facilitate this.

Then, in January 2024, the cable was laid out across Elliott Bay in just one

day, reaching a depth of about 70 metres. To ensure that the cable was laid safely and efficiently, the port worked with vessel traffic services, the coast guard and Washington State Ferries.

The team is now in the final stage of the project and finishing the installation of electrical equipment at Pier 66 that will allow cruise ships to connect to the power supply.

The project is expected to be completed during the summer 2024 cruise season. Once complete, Port of Seattle will be one of the only homeports in the world to offer shore power in all cruise berths and starting in 2027 the port will require every homeported ship to connect to shore power. **CFR**

Careful considerations

What goes into planning the perfect itinerary? Holland America Line's Francesco Rossiello tells Amber Hickman about the cruise line's decision-making process



“One of the main reasons guests sail with us is because of our destination-rich itineraries”

Planning an itinerary that cruise guests will love is no small feat for Holland America Line. With 11 ships in its fleet, all with capacity for between 1,400 and 2,650 passengers, the brand must consider a lot of different factors during the decision-making process.

Operational requirements, cost and regulatory compliance are all vital considerations, and Holland America Line must also factor in market trends, sustainability goals and customer satisfaction to drive loyalty and create a positive brand image.

For Francesco Rossiello, senior manager of deployment and itinerary planning at Holland America Line, creating a

successful cruise “involves adhering to specific core principles that are designed to deliver a premium experience to guests.”

These principles include tailoring itineraries to suit the preferences of both first-time cruisers and seasoned travellers, offering a mix of popular and unique destinations, curating authentic experiences that reflect local culture, creating a balance of relaxation and exploration, and considering practical elements such as weather and safety. Holland America Line also prioritises attention to detail to ensure a seamless experience from start to end.

Even with these core principles, the standard of perfection is an ever-changing target, says Rossiello. This is



Photo: Holland America Line

Nieuw Statendam will visit Alesund in Norway during its ‘Viking Tales and Celtic Origins’ roundtrip



Holland America Line's guests get to experience a variety of destinations on its cruises, such as Eidfjord, Norway

why it is important to listen to guests' opinions and implement their wants and needs following feedback.

"One of the main reasons guests sail with us is because of our destination-rich itineraries," says Rossiello. "Therefore, we have integrated more overnight and late-night calls, especially on longer itineraries. This means guests can spend more time immersing themselves in the local culture of these ports.

"On the other hand, we also know our guests want to take time to recharge and enjoy the onboard facilities too, so we make sure to include an adequate number of days at sea that allows them to relax on the ship. Our 2026 'Grand World Voyage', for example, will have no more than three consecutive port days without at least one sea day in between."

In addition to the 'Grand World Voyage', Holland America Line has planned various itineraries taking place over the next few years that will provide guests with new, different experiences based on their interests.

"I'm most excited about the 14-day 'Viking Tales and Celtic Origins' roundtrip, that will take place onboard Nieuw Statendam from August 2025," says Rossiello.

The cruise will depart from Rotterdam in the Netherlands, before heading to Alesund, Norway, crossing the Norwegian Sea and exploring five different ports in Iceland.

During the ship's journey in Iceland, it will make lengthy calls to ports such as Djupivogur and Isafjordur, and offer a full day and late-night departure in Reykjavik. The ship will then head to the British Isles, stopping at the Isle of Lewis and the Isle of Skye, before heading to Dover and back to Rotterdam.

"This cruise has a huge range of diverse and appealing destinations," explains Rossiello. "The depth at which it explores Iceland will give travellers a truly unique chance to see the beauty of Iceland without having to drive or pay for hotels. Furthermore, guests can embark on the roundtrip from either Dover or

Rotterdam, making it convenient for many guests."

With each ship spending a significant amount of time in ports, it is increasingly crucial for Holland America Line to maintain a good relationship with port and destination authorities if it wants to create high-quality itineraries.

How is this harmonious relationship achieved? "Effective communication is key to reaching business goals together," says Rossiello.

"In addition, responsiveness and adaptability is crucial for adjusting to daily changes, new regulations or last-minute issues such as port congestion. For example, one of my successful collaborations is with Sergio Senesi, CEO of the Cemar Agency Network, which offers port assistance in Italy. By building a relationship based on these attributes, we have been able to work together to effectively manage high-demand turnaround calls on weekends in Civitavecchia, Italy." **CFR**



Increasing inclusivity and diversity

Members of the MedCruise Association and cruise executives gathered in the Spanish city of Tarragona in June to discuss how they can join forces to make the industry more diverse and sustainable. Rebecca Gibson reports

Each year, Tarragona in Spain hosts a castell competition, where teams with people of all ages and abilities share their collective strength to build the highest human tower. MedCruise president Figen Ayan drew a parallel between the castells and the more than 154 ports and 57 associate members in the MedCruise Association when opening the 64th MedCruise General Assembly in Tarragona, Spain, in June 2024.

“We all carry universal values such as teamwork, solidarity, self-improvement, the feeling of belonging and the integration of people of all ages, races and social backgrounds,” she said, welcoming almost 200 delegates, which include a record number of cruise executives, port and association members, media representatives and travel experts. “That’s why we decided to prepare this whole programme with events and sessions echoing one mainstream philosophy: inclusiveness.”

Hosted in partnership with Tarragona Cruise Port, the conference kicked off with a ‘Women Power in the Waters’ session, where it was revealed that women make up just two per cent of the 1.25 million seafarers worldwide. Celebrity Cruises’ Kate McCue, who was the first American woman to captain a mega cruise ship, partially attributed this low figure to a lack of visible female representation. She gave an insight into how she uses her

social media platform to showcase the “plentiful opportunities” for careers at sea and urged others to join her in dispelling outdated perceptions. “If you can see it, you can be it,” she said. “Women are now across every single onboard department. Gender is not something that is going to limit you, regardless of what your position is onboard the ship.”

Marie-Caroline Laurent, director general of Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Europe, supported McCue’s plea for increased diversity and representation. “The success of the cruise industry is definitely thanks to the variety of people,” she said, outlining CLIA’s new initiatives to encourage younger generations to consider maritime careers, which include sharing testimonials from employees across the industry and taking students onboard cruise ships.

Ayan joined the panel to reveal that MedCruise has created a dedicated careers page on its website in response to the numerous enquiries from people looking to join the cruise sector.

A later presentation by Edgar Weggelaar, partner and CEO of Queer Destinations, outlined how ports and destinations can actively welcome the LGBTQ+ community.

In another session exploring how ports and destinations can create “harmonious and holistic services”, cruise executives suggested the top priorities should be to



MedCruise General Assembly attendees pictured after a workshop in which they tried forming their own human towers

ease overcrowding by diverting traffic to lesser-known attractions and developing sustainable shore excursions.

“Big marquee destinations are getting overcrowded, so we’re looking at smaller, off-the-beaten-path destinations,” said Jeff Shieh, manager of deployment planning and analysis at Seabourn. “Guests want to see something a little bit different.”

Christine Manjencic, vice president of destination services operations at Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings, noted that the increase in younger passengers has prompted a “big shift” in the type of shore experiences guests want. “People are gravitating to experiences with smaller groups,” she said. Guests also “really love” NCLH’s new sustainability-focused excursions, which include plastic fishing and tours of oyster farms.

Referencing the small anti-cruise protest organised by environmentalists outside the conference venue in Tarragona, Manjencic said it is vital for cruise lines and ports to engage with local communities to alleviate their concerns and “understand what we can do better and what they expect from us”.

Both Francesco Rossiello, senior manager of deployment and itinerary planning at Holland America Line, and Giovanna Dipasquale, Ambassador Cruise Line’s head of itinerary management, advocated for cruise lines and ports to

join forces to address issues raised by local communities during the ‘Strategies to Integrate Medium Sized Ports into the Cruise Itinerary’ session.

Rossiello explained why educating locals about the “significant investments” cruise lines are making to reduce emissions could allay their environmental concerns, while Dipasquale emphasised the importance of communicating the socioeconomic benefits of cruising.

Dipasquale also discussed the key attributes cruise lines prioritise when choosing ports for their itineraries, advising them to invest in good infrastructure, accessible facilities, proximity to attractions, shore excursion options to suit all passenger preferences. “Choose your clients and make your port right for them,” she said, cautioning ports against trying to target every type of cruise line.

Fellow panellist and travel entrepreneur Scott Eddy recommended small and medium-sized ports to experiment with using social media to raise their profile, encouraging them to “make employees superstars” and “push out storytelling in a very unique way”.

“A small port could become a huge port if it has the proper digital infrastructure in place and constantly tells stories about the destination,” he said, adding that smaller ports have “way more advantage

TARRAGONA OPENS A NEW TERMINAL

The MedCruise General Assembly coincided with inauguration of the new Tarragona Cruise Port, which has a 759-metre berthing line, a 40,000-square-metre esplanade and a 2,200-square-metre terminal equipped with various passenger facilities. The port, which aims to offer shore power in 2026, expects to host 60 calls and around 122,000 passengers in 2024.

“Together, we are not just opening a port; we are opening doors to new possibilities and a brighter future for everyone connected to this beautiful city,” said Mehmet Kutman, chairman and CEO of terminal operator Global Ports Holding.



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Delegates enjoyed a gala dinner at the Moll de Costa in Tarragona

here” than bigger ports because people are typically unfamiliar with their stories.

Cruise industry expert Stewart Chiron advised ports to invest in promoting themselves rather than relying on cruise lines to do it on their behalf. “It’s imperative to reach out and make yourself known,” he said, adding that smaller ports should also join organisations like MedCruise.

Another session explored whether these small and medium-sized Mediterranean ports could potentially be included in expedition itineraries, seeking perspectives from panellists Spiros Almpertis, vice president of port operations and itinerary planning at Crystal Cruises, Hugues Lamy, director port operations at Swan Hellenic, and Sacha Rougier, vice president of itinerary planning and destination experiences at Orient Express Silenseas.

While all three agreed that the natural, cultural and historical attractions in Mediterranean ports make them an appealing option for expedition cruises, they warned that several factors would make this difficult. Almpertis and Lamy highlighted inconsistent regulations regarding the use of kayaks and Zodiacs for excursions as a key challenge,

suggesting that a solution could be to eliminate the use of such equipment and instead focus on excursions that enable guests to meet local communities.

Forming partnerships to help the industry overcome challenges and capitalise on new opportunities was a prominent theme during the event, particularly during the 648 business-to-business meetings, networking events and internal member meetings. During the latter, members voted to establish an Atlantic Isles committee, comprising ports in Lisbon, Madeira, Azores, Leixoes and Portimão in Portugal, as well as Cabo Verde in West Africa, and Cadiz, Tenerife, Huelva and the Canary Islands in Spain. Members also created a new East Med and Red Sea group, which now exists alongside the West Med and the Black Sea and Adriatic groups.

“We are approaching the end of a very active and productive three-year mandate,” said Ayan, noting that one of the biggest achievements is an almost 10 per cent rise in port members and a 50 per cent in associate members over the past two years. “MedCruise and the cruise industry have been propelling us to be together more than ever and be strong reliable supports for each other.” **CFR**

A TASTE OF TARRAGONA



Designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2000, the city of Tarragona boasts multiple remnants from its time as a major Roman city, including a circus, amphitheatre (pictured) and a tower. Visitors can take a walking tour to explore the city, where they will also see medieval buildings. Meanwhile, a short coach trip to the surrounding areas offers opportunities to visit Poblet, one of the world’s largest and most complete Cistercian abbeys.



Cruise guests looking to explore the modernist architecture of renowned architects such as Antonio Gaudí can take a short trip to the nearby city of Reus to visit the Gaudi Centre or see examples of the buildings he has designed in the streets. Another impressive attraction is Casa Navas (pictured), the only example of a Catalan Modernisme building by architect Lluís Domènech i Montaner with its original interiors.



Tarragona is one of the biggest wine and vermouth regions in Catalonia, and travellers will find multiple opportunities to sample the produce for themselves with a tasting session at a locally run business, such as Vermouth Padró.

Preparing for the future

Javier Rodriguez Sanchez shares with Laura Hyde how Global Ports Holdings is preparing its Western Mediterranean ports for the predicted increase in global cruise passenger numbers



The port hopes to generate additional revenue by hosting corporate events in its new open-plan terminal building



“Working with locals is crucial for the success of the port and the destination”

Global Ports Holding (GPH) inaugurated its new €5.5 million (\$6 million) terminal building at Tarragona Cruise Port in Spain this June, as the port hosted the 64th edition of the MedCruise General Assembly.

The new terminal features a food and beverage and retail area together with a tourist information centre. Solar panels will generate the required energy to run the terminal with the excess being sold back to the grid, generating extra income for the port. The building was constructed using an off-site industrialised modular system terminal in Almeria, Spain, before being assembled in Tarragona.

“We have built a terminal based on the existing and projected cruise passenger numbers, but we believe traffic will be

higher in 10 to 15 years,” explains Javier Rodriguez Sanchez, regional director on West Mediterranean ports for GPH. “Thanks to this construction technique, we will be able to expand the building from its current 2,000 square metres to whatever is needed.”

Elsewhere in Spain, GPH plans to renovate the existing terminal building at Alicante Cruise Port. “The terminal was built in the early 2000s, so we’ve made a commitment to renew it following the same structure as we’ve done with Tarragona,” says Sanchez. “The plan is to have the terminal completed by September and hold an inauguration ceremony for its official opening.”

GPH is also investing heavily in its ports in the Canary Islands, including cruise ports in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Lanzarote, and Fuerteventura, with a large project costing almost €40 million (\$43.8 million) underway within the three islands.

“We hope the new terminal in Las Palmas will accommodate up to four homeporting ships at the same time,” says Sanchez. “The project is expected to be completed by December 2025. In Lanzarote and Fuerteventura, the new terminals will be finished and ready to welcome cruise guests this winter, 2024-2025.

“We have so many projects in the pipeline across the Western Mediterranean and the Atlantic, further afield within the GPH portfolio, but the success of these projects and the overall success of the ports in these destinations depends on us offering the best cruise guest experience possible. To do this, we must work with the local people and stakeholders; working with locals is crucial for the success of the port and the destination.” **CFR**

The gateway to Africa

Regional efforts led by Wesgro have helped to develop Cape Town and the Western Cape as a standout destination for cruise visits



Photo: Wesgro

Cape Town has been developed as a cruise destination through the Cruise Cape Town initiative

Cape Town and the Western Cape province have emerged as an important cruise tourism destination on the African continent, reflecting both their unique offerings for visitors and the efforts undertaken as part of the region's cruise development initiative, Cruise Cape Town.

Led by official tourism, trade and investment promotion agency Wesgro, Cruise Cape Town aims to increase the region's cruise market by supporting tourism and stimulating economic growth and job creation. The project is a public-private partnership established to connect key stakeholders of the cruise sector (both locally and globally) to resolve local challenges and develop

new cruise itineraries for the region, thereby ensuring the destination offering is competitive.

“Cape Town offers a wide combination of experiences for cruise lines and their guests”

Situated at the tip of the African continent, the region is strategically positioned as the southern gateway to Africa, and Cape Town offers a wide combination of experiences for cruise lines

and their guests. The city's cruise terminal, run by V&A Waterfront, provides a smooth entry point that integrates modern amenities with a South African-inspired design. The terminal's dedication to visitor experience was recognised with the title of 'Africa's Leading Cruise Port' at the 2023 World Travel Awards.

Although Cape Town is regarded as the main port of the province, the Western Cape is also home to Mossel Bay and Saldanha Bay, which are well-positioned as additional ports of call. The three ports along the Western Cape coastline allow visitors to easily transition from the diverse experiences of Cape Town to the Western Cape's nature reserves and wine farms. **CFR**



Cruise the scenic heartland of North America

By Rebecca Yackley, Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation

The Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System is growing as a cruise destination and developing new destinations for the 2024 season and beyond

The Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway system is a 3,700-kilometre marine highway with direct access to the major port cities and multiple picturesque destinations in the heartland of North America.

From the Gulf of St. Lawrence to Duluth, Minnesota, on Lake Superior, the Great Lakes offers experiences of a lifetime for passengers looking for a new destination to explore. This growing hub for luxury cruises includes the St. Lawrence River, all five Great Lakes and unique ports that dot the shoreline,

all of them rich with historic, maritime and Midwestern charm. With the water an important part of everyday life, prime tourism attractions are close to berthing spaces.

The continued growth of the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System's cruise industry is a direct result of the many partnerships developed over the past decade. This team approach between the port authorities, tourism bureaus, state and provincial partners ensures a seamless operation and a wonderful experience for cruise ship owners, operators, itinerary

planners and passengers throughout this stunning binational waterway.

For the 2024 navigation season, six cruise lines will operate eight vessels on the Great Lakes Seaway System, offering a wide range of itineraries between Canada and the USA. Collectively, Hapag-Lloyd Cruises, Pearl Seas Cruises, Plantours, Ponant, St. Lawrence Cruise Lines and Viking will make approximately 140,000 passenger visits to 37 destinations. And, with the anticipated return of the two former American Queen Voyages' vessels purchased by Victory Cruise Lines in the



Cruise guests can take waterside tours of The Slate Islands Provincial Park, a biodiverse and provincially significant archipelago in Lake Superior



Buffalo in New York City offers multiple attractions, including the Buffalo Naval Park museum, where cruise guests can explore four decommissioned naval ships

2025 season, the enthusiasm for Great Lakes cruising continues to grow.

Another contributing factor for the increase in passengers on the Great Lakes is the continued effort to raise awareness of the Great Lakes as a destination for cruise ships. Whether it's direct educational outreach to the cruise lines and travel agents, or general conversation with friends and family, the enthusiasm experienced in telling the story about the cruise industry on the Great Lakes never gets old.

We have developed multiple new excursion options in various locations for the 2024 season, including on Flowerpot Island in Ontario, which is famous for its natural 'flowerpot' rock pillars, caves, historic light station and rare plants. Most visitors take a tour boat from the town of Tobermory to spend a half or full day on the island hiking the trails, viewing the scenery, picnicking or swimming, but as cruise passengers get to moor next to the island, they're able to skip the commute.

Elsewhere in Ontario, Red Rock, which is surrounded by the world-famous Nipigon River, offers cruise visitors a pristine example of 'getting closer to nature' thanks to numerous inland lakes,

fishing opportunities, and a continuously growing network of hiking trails.

The village of Rossport in Ontario overlooks the pristine Rossport Islands, part of a huge archipelago designated as Canada's newest marine conservation area. The Rossport area is a nature lover's paradise often described as "a cathedral without pillars" and, sometimes, the "Peggy's Cove of the North".

"The enthusiasm for Great Lakes cruising continues to grow"

Another attraction in Lake Superior is the Slate Islands Provincial Park, which was established in 1985 to protect the biodiversity and provincially significant elements of the natural and cultural landscape. To maintain the archipelago's ecological systems, the recreational use for cruising passengers has been limited to waterside touring only.

The Slate Islands were formed by a meteorite impact about 12 kilometres south of Terrace Bay, which offers must-see attractions of its own. The Aguasabon Falls & Gorge, located

near the Terrace Bay lighthouse, is a spectacular 100-foot waterfall that cascades with beautiful ferocity in the spring and serene grace in the summer and autumn. It flows into the Aguasabon Gorge, along a 2.6-billion-year-old rock face. Also nearby is the Casque Isles Trail, which is an important section of both The Great Trail and the Voyageur Hiking Trail.

Meanwhile Buffalo, New York, is eager to welcome cruise ships and passengers to its redeveloped waterfront. Attractions such as the spectacular Niagara Falls, Frank Lloyd Wright structures, and Burchfield Penney Art Center create a rich experiences for passengers visiting the city.

With six unique cities accessible from one dock, Bay City in Michigan offers various experiences including the 110-acre Dow Gardens and the historic USS Edson naval ship, which is now a museum offering guided tours.

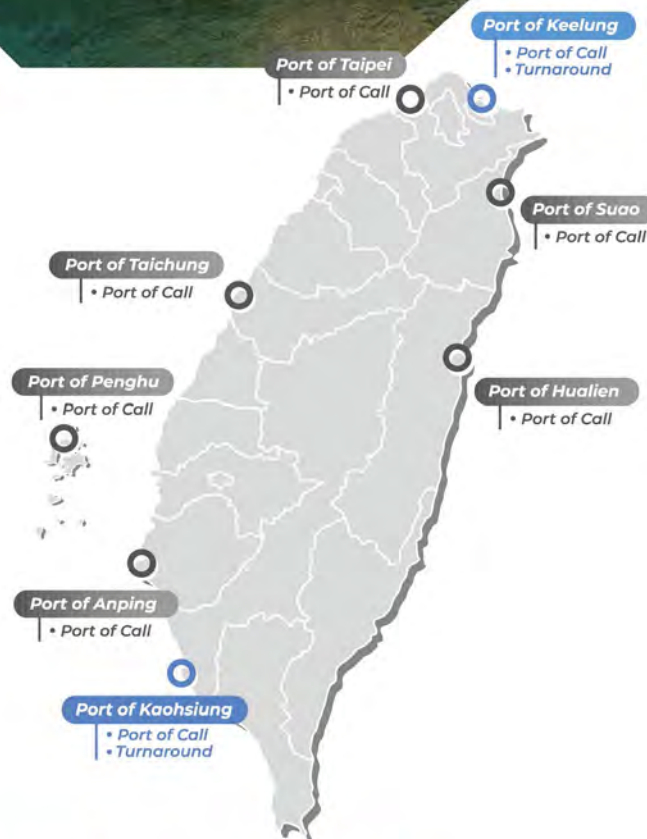
Another top attraction for passengers are the locks on the binational waterway, located on the St. Lawrence Seaway, Welland Canal and St. Mary's River. **CFR**

Rebecca Yackley is director of trade and economic development at Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation

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A record breaker

Port Everglades expects to handle an unprecedented 4.4 million cruise passengers in the 2024-2025 cruise season, as well as first-time visits from three cruise ships



Port Everglades is expecting one ferry and 45 cruise ships to visit the port in the 2024-2025 season

Port Everglades in Florida is poised to welcome a record-breaking 4.4 million cruise passengers during the 2024-2025 cruise season, which will also see three cruise ships make inaugural visits to the US port.

The port is expecting one ferry and 45 cruise ships from 10 different brands, including Celebrity Cruises, Crystal, Cunard, Disney Cruise Line, Holland America Line, Princess Cruises, The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection, Royal Caribbean International, Silversea Cruises and Viking Cruises.

Princess Cruises' Sun Princess, the line's largest and first LNG-powered ship, is scheduled to make its debut in southern Florida in October. Sun Princess

is the first Sphere-class ship and can accommodate more than 4,300 guests.

Crystal, the newly rebranded luxury cruise line, will begin homeporting its refurbished Crystal Serenity at Port Everglades in November. The brand's owner, A&K Travel Group, carried out a €150 million (\$164 million) refurbishment onboard Crystal Serenity, and its sister Crystal Symphony in 2023, after saving Crystal Cruises from liquidation in June 2022.

On 11 December, The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection's Ilma, which means water in Maltese, will be christened at the port, following its maiden call on 27 November. The luxury line's second yacht will feature the highest space and

staff-to-guest ratios in the luxury cruise sector, according to the cruise line.

Silversea's second Nova-class ship, Silver Ray, will arrive in Port Everglades on 19 December after spending the summer season in the Mediterranean. The ship's panoramic windows and expansive decks offer 270-degree views for its more than 700 guests.

The Baleària Caribbean ferry also sails year-round from Port Everglades to Freeport and Bimini in The Bahamas.

The port is close to three international airports, including Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport less than two miles away, which gives cruise guests the option to add a pre- or post-cruise stay in Florida to their holiday. **CFR**

Making a difference

PortMiami's economic impact topped \$61 billion in 2023, demonstrating the port's vital importance to Florida and the global cruise industry

PortMiami in Florida, is one of the world's largest and busiest cruise ports and is therefore known as the 'Cruise Capital of the World'. The seaport operates as a landlord port and partners with 23 cruise line companies, including Carnival Corporation, Royal Caribbean Group, MSC Cruises, Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings and Virgin Voyages.

The port's success has grown further in recent years, as it experienced its busiest ever cruise season in 2023. PortMiami's annual economic impact has increased from \$41.4 billion in 2016 to \$61.4 billion in 2023, according to a new study conducted by consulting firm Martin Associates. The total economic activity accounts for 3.9 per cent of the \$1.6 trillion gross domestic product for the state of Florida. The study also shows the number of jobs supported by the seaport's cruise and cargo activity has grown from 334,500 to 340,078, including 29,423 direct local jobs.

"PortMiami is not only one of Miami-Dade County's most important economic engines; its economic impact is also felt regionally and globally," says Daniella Levine Cava, mayor of Miami-Dade County. "This report confirms the seaport's vital role in supporting good-paying local jobs and contributing to the growth of our community, in addition to our commitment to resilience and reducing our carbon footprint with shore power and our net zero plan."

In the past three years, the port has opened three new cruise terminals: Norwegian Cruise Line's Pearl of Miami; Carnival Cruise Line's Terminal F; and Virgin Voyages' Palm Grove. Currently under construction is MSC Cruises'



PortMiami supports over 340,000 jobs through its shipping activity

Terminal AA, which will open in 2024. The Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners has also approved Royal Caribbean Group's new Cruise Terminal G, which is expected to open in late 2027.

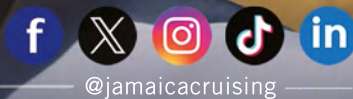
The port has also become the first large cruise port on the US eastern seaboard to construct shore power facilities at five cruise berths. From 17 June 2024, visiting cruise ships have been able to turn off their diesel generators and plug into landside electrical power while docked. The shore power was developed in a partnership between Miami-Dade County (PortMiami), Carnival

Corporation, MSC Cruises, Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings, Royal Caribbean Group, Virgin Voyages, and Florida Power & Light Company.

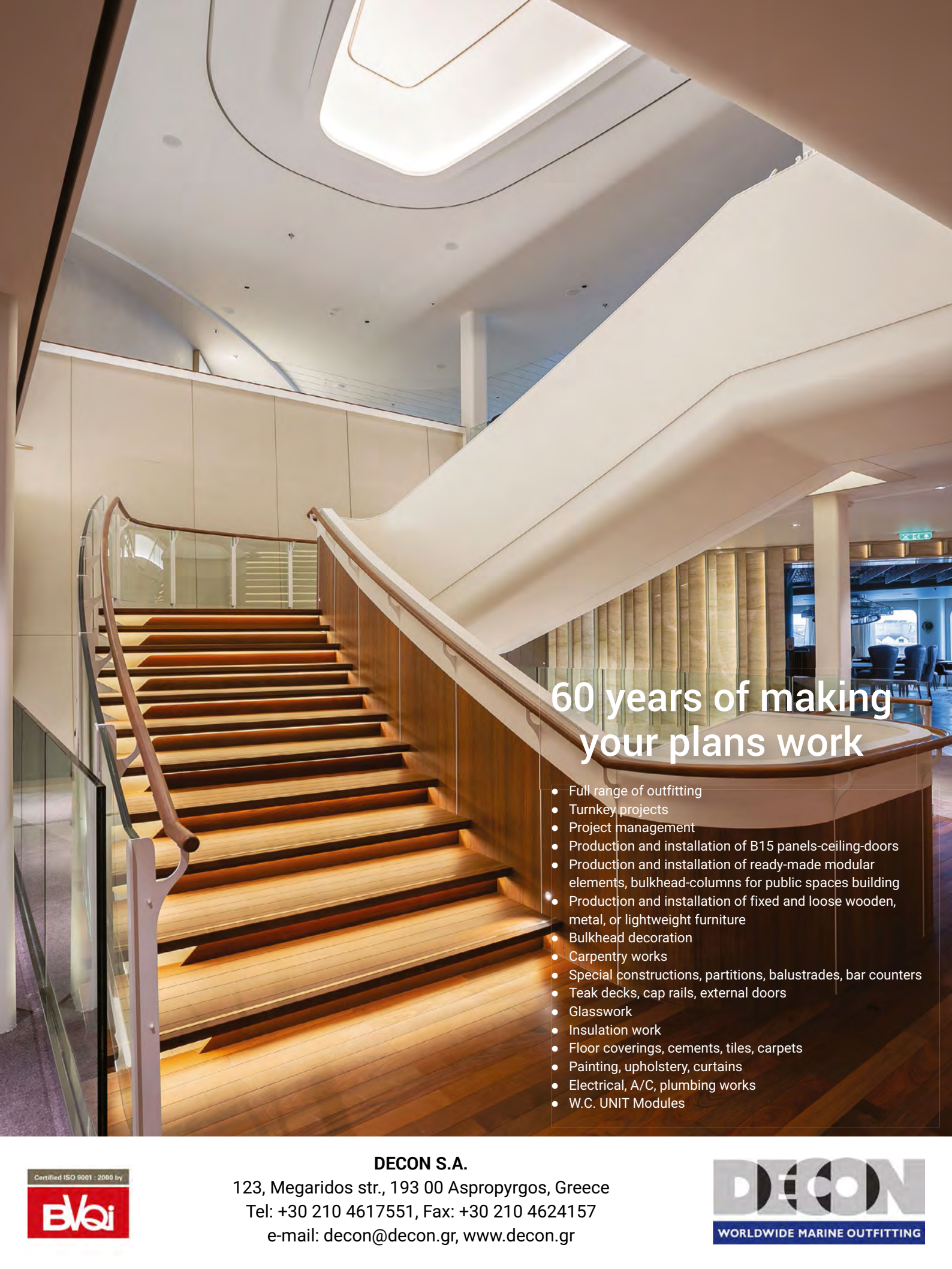
"The seaport continues to play a critical role in the economic vitality of our region," says Hydi Webb, director and CEO of PortMiami. "We will continue to invest in our infrastructure to ensure that PortMiami remains a world-class cruise and cargo port. I want to thank all the seaport's partners for their unrelenting support. Our continued growth and success are a result of strong collaborations." **CFR**



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