

Destination MEDCRUISE

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Via Trieste



PHOTO: TRIESTE PORT AUTHORITY

A modern, lively city, Trieste once played an important role as the chief port of the Austro-Hungarian Hapsburg Empire. In fact, Trieste was often referred to as 'A Vienna by the Sea'. At the end of the First World War with the collapse of the Hapsburg Empire, the city was returned to Italy. Trieste was one of the first European cities to take to coffee in a big way. The first coffee house was opened at the beginning of the 18th century and several of the original cafes are still going strong.

Cruise ships dock facing the famed Piazza Unità d'Italia. The square was created towards the end of the 19th century. It houses the City Hall, with its clock tower featuring statues of Mikeze and Lakeze, figures from Trieste folklore; Government House, with its gilded mosaic wall decorations; and the former Head Office of Lloyd Triestino, built in Renaissance style by an Austrian architect.

The port of Trieste, in the last three years, has undertaken major development for cruise ship calls. To encourage expansion, the Port Authority is

going to finance the project of renovation of the Stazione Maritima with the complete renovation of a building dedicated to embarkation and disembarkation operations. Other works will enlarge the piers in order to receive ships of 300mtr in length and 10mtr in draft. The total investment will be approximately €5m.

In March 2005, representatives of the Trieste Port Authority, the Regional Friuli Venezia Giulia, the presidents of the four provinces and all the mayors of the municipalities facing the gulf of Trieste signed an agreement to target cruiseships to visit Port of Trieste either in transit or to use it as a home base.

In summer 2006, Trieste will become the tenth homeport in Italy for Costa Crociere. From June 18 to September 24, Costa Marina will depart every Sunday from the Venezia Giulia port on a 7-day itinerary that

includes calls to Ancona, Santorini and Mykonos, Athens, Corfu and Dubrovnik. There will be a total of 15 calls in Trieste, with an expected flow of approximately 20,000 cruise passengers.

Trieste received 18 cruise calls and 17,301 passengers in 2005. Expected calls for 2006 look set to double with 42 calls booked so far and an estimated 60,000 passengers to the port.



■ Carnival Conquest entering the Port of Trieste



Via Tarragona

Magnificent Mediterranean coastline



A UNESCO World Heritage site brimming with Roman and Medieval remains

Tarragona is the most important port in southern Catalonia. Situated 60 miles south of Barcelona, it is a UNESCO World Heritage site brimming with Roman

and medieval remains. The city has been known as Imperial Tarraco since the Roman domination. In Tarragona you can admire some of the best preserved Roman ruins in the Iberian

Peninsula. Another reason to come to the city is Port Aventura, one of the biggest amusement parks in Europe.

Tarragona is best visited on foot as all of the monuments and museums are in the old city and the streets are all pedestrianised. Highlights include the Cyclopean Walls that extend for over 1,000 yards and date back to the 6th century BC, the Cathedral of Santa Maria that forms a magnificent set with its side buildings of the Cambreria palace and the Casa Rectory, and possesses Romanesque and Gothic characteristics. Other tourist attractions are the ancient Roman Amphitheatre that seated over 12,000 and the Balcón del Mediterráneo, a terrace overlooking Milagro Beach and the magnificent Mediterranean coastline. The city has a National Archaeological Museum that consists of two centres, one dedicated to Roman archaeology in general, the other being a large, late-Roman necropolis dating from the third and fourth centuries AD.

Via Israel

Three cruise destinations

Israel, as the birthplace of Judaism and Christianity and the location of one of Islam's holy cities has a special meaning to millions of people throughout the world. There are three cruise destinations situated in Israel: Haifa, Ashdod and Eilat.

Haifa is Israel's main passenger port and the country's third largest city. From this port it is possible to take a trip to Acre, a historic walled city with continuous settlement from the Phoenician period. The present city is characteristic of a fortified town dating from the Ottoman 18th and 19th centuries, with typical urban components such as a citadel, mosques, khans and baths. The remains of the Crusader town, dating from 1104 to 1291, lie almost intact, both above and below today's street level, providing an exceptional picture of the layout and structures of the capital of the medieval Crusader kingdom of Jerusalem. Perched on sand dunes, Ashdod is a gateway to the Holy Land. From here, you can

journey to Jerusalem and Bethlehem and walk the Via Dolorosa and see the Stations of the Cross. Among the many sites of interest are

the Wailing Wall, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and, in Bethlehem, the Church of the Nativity.



Haifa – providing access to Israel's holy cities



Via Cagliari

Steeped in history

The ancient city of Cagliari in Sardinia is one of the Mediterranean's oldest cities.

The city, steeped in history, is rich in Roman ruins including an amphitheatre, cathedral and castle and is situated within walking distance to the port.

Only ten minutes away are Peotto Beach and Molentargius lagoon where pink flamingos and a variety of rare birds live all year round. In addition, the best names in Italian fashion and handcrafted



souvenirs are found downtown.

A half-hour drive takes one to Nora, one of the best-preserved Roman villages. It was founded by the Phoenicians and has Carthaginian as well as Roman remains. Still visible today are the remains of a Carthaginian warehouse, and various Roman buildings, including baths with splendid mosaics and a theatre.

The Port of Cagliari is undergoing revitalisation along with reclamation and

development of areas within the port for new initiatives. This includes the demolition of the side wall of Levante Pier in order to facilitate the mooring of the mega cruiseships; demolition of the wall that runs down the middle of Ichnusa Pier to create a centre for tourists and the development of Ichnusa Pier for cruise traffic including the construction of a multi-functional building fully equipped to meet tourist needs. This pier will be 325mtr long and cover 28,810sq mtr, with a draft of nine mtr.

Via Catania

Impressive architecture

Greeks, Romans and Aragonese held sway in turns in Sicily's ancient second city located at the foot of Mount Etna. The city was founded in 729 BC by the Greeks on the site of a Phoenician trading post. Much of the architecture found within Catania is of a Baroque style; in particular the Cathedral and Palazzo Biscardi, situated close to the port are superb examples worth visiting.

Excursions available from Catania include a visit to Mount Etna, the largest and highest active volcano in Europe standing at an impressive 10,723 feet high. It has erupted more than 130 times, the biggest eruption being in 1669 when part of the town was destroyed. Standing on the flanks of the volcano you can enjoy a panoramic view of the city.

Taormina, a short distance from Catania, is a picturesque town with a magnificent position on a terrace overlooking the Ionian



Catania – located at the foot of Mount Etna

Sea. One highlight is the Corvaja Palace, once owned by the Corvaja family, one of the most ancient and noble families of Taormina, who owned it from 1538 to 1945. It rises in

Abbey Square and is the most important medieval palace of the town, with an Arabic style yet at the same time Gothic and Norman influences.



Via Messina

New cruise terminal 2008



Messina – one of the gateways to Sicily

The harbour of Messina is in the city centre, close to the main places of interest and the shopping centre and well connected with the airports of Reggio Calabria and Catania.

A stopover in Messina offers a wide range of shore excursions for visiting some of the most suggestive sites in Sicily, like Taormina, the Volcano Etna and the Greco-Roman Theatre in Tyndaris.

A new cruise terminal is due to be built at Messina. Completion of alignment of two berths to create one of 450mtr and the addition of 10,000sq mtr of forecourts is projected for December 2008. Other planned projects include the improvements to the security system and logistic

organisation of the port areas, terminal logistics, a road connection between the port and the highway, a new road system in the port area and renovation of the trade fair area.

Even if cruise calls decrease in 2005, cruise passengers are up 5% on last year's figures, confirming the positive trend registered in past seasons and the interest in the port of Messina for the biggest vessels and cruise lines. As a matter of fact some of the most important cruise lines (Carnival Cruise Lines, Celebrity Cruises, Costa, Island Cruises, MSC, Travelplan) included Messina in their 2005 itineraries. 2005 saw 165 cruise calls to the Port of Messina bringing in 214,660 passengers. Figures for 2006 show an expected 175 cruise calls bringing in 225,000 passengers.



Walk to monuments and sites of interest

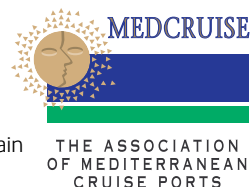
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