

Destination MEDCRUISE

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Via Ravenna

A sneak preview of Ravenna's new terminal



Construction work has begun for the realisation of the port of Ravenna's new Passenger Terminal at Porto Corsini. In view of its position i.e. on the right side of the breakwater entrance, this new Terminal will result in reduced berthing times, possibility to host larger and longer vessels and will constitute ideal surroundings for its cruise passengers.

The new Terminal which is expected to be completed in 2010, will offer up to four berths, two of which will be able to accommodate cruise ships with a length of up to 300mtr and draught of 10.5mtr. The adjacent area, to be urbanised, and measuring 14 hectares will host a new Maritime Station, office space, an ample parking area, residences and parks.

Ravenna is a treasure chest of art, history and culture of the first order. Within its ancient walls it keeps the richest heritage of mosaics dating from the 5th and 6th centuries. For this reason 8 of its early Christian and Byzantine religious buildings have been acknowledged as UNESCO

World Heritage sites. As a matter of fact, in the summer with the Mosaics by Night programme the treasures of Ravenna come alive in the evening with guided tours and special itineraries for tourists.

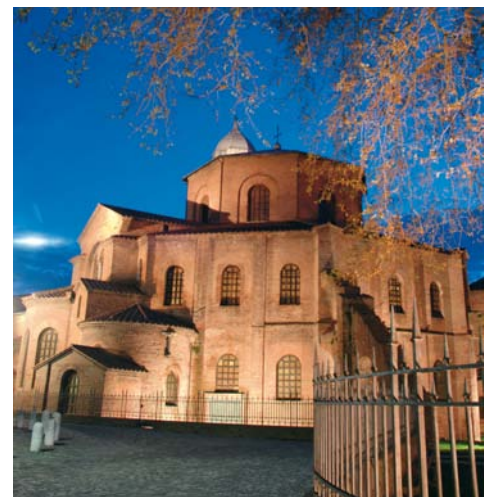
However, Ravenna is also well known for its numerous cultural and internationally prestigious events that take place during the year, and particularly Ravenna Festival, an international musical appointment, offering in the summer high level events of symphony, opera, chamber and ethnic music.

There are plenty of opportunities for more lively fun at the discos by the beach and there is no end to the equipment and services offered for all types of sport and fitness.

What's more, there are excellent shopping facilities in the city centre, buying hand-made mosaics or looking around the markets, trying out the delicious local dishes and the first-rate wines of the Emilia-Romagna region.

From Ravenna and in less than an hour, one may easily visit the Mirabilandia Theme Park and

San Marino, capital of the tiny homonymous Republic, a monument in itself and a great duty free shopping district. Other neighbouring cities worth visiting include Ferrara and Pomposa, Faenza and Brisighella, the River Po Delta Park, Bologna and Maranello (seat of the Ferrari racing car team).



Basilica di San Vitale by Nicola Strocchi



Via Batumi

Black Sea beauty

Adjara is situated in the southwest part of Georgia on the Black Sea. Population is more than 400,000 and the administrative centre is Batumi. There are a number of resorts along this coastline including: Kobuleti, Tsikhisdziri, Green Cape, Makhinjauri, Batumi and pleasure resorts such as:

Phichvnari, Bobokvati, Chakvi, Gonio, Kvariati and Sarpi.

The pleasant city of Batumi with its beach, has a subtropical flair where palms, cypresses, magnolias, oleanders,



lemons and oranges grow. Lying on the shore of a deep bay, Batumi has the most convenient harbour on the Black Sea coast of the Caucasus.

Besides museums and theatres, sites to visit include the boulevard along the coast, the nearby Gonio fortress (pictured left) and the botanical gardens rich with subtropical vegetation.

Gonio Fortress, previously known as Apsarun, is located 12km south of Batumi on the Black Sea shore. This fortress of a rectangular plan has gates at each of its four sides. The wall is reinforced with eighteen turrets. The earliest record of the fortress is found in Greek-Roman sources from the 1st century. The Roman Empire, Byzantium, and later the city-republics of Italy displayed great interest in the fortress. In the 16th century it was seized by the Ottomans and now stands as a ruin.

The Botanical Gardens of Batumi lay 9km from the centre of the town. The Gardens consist of nine phytogeographical parts and two parks. There are more than 4,000 kinds of tree and bush from all continents of the world.

Via Bari

UNESCO World Heritage site

Two of the most popular tours undertaken by passengers visiting Bari are San Nicola's Cathedral (pictured right) and Alberobello, the city made of trulli.

The trulli are limestone dwellings found in the southern region of Puglia. They are remarkable examples of drywall (mortarless) construction, a prehistoric building technique still in use in this region. The trulli are made of roughly worked limestone boulders collected from neighbouring fields. Characteristically, they feature pyramidal, domed or conical roofs built up of limestone slabs.

Today there are approximately a thousand trulli in Alberobello which has been inhabited since the 15th century and was designated a national monument in 1930 and also an UNESCO World Heritage site.

San Nicola's Cathedral is located in Bari itself. In May each year the feast of San Nicola is celebrated here. A procession of some three hundred persons in the costumes of the Norman era leaves the Swabian castle to reach the church of San Nicola. There they re-enact the delivery of San Nicola's bones to the Dominican friars, recalling the events of 1087, when some merchants of Bari managed to steal the saint's relics from their resting place in Myra. The saint's statue also has a place of honour in a procession of boats that makes its way along the coast.





Via Livorno

New pier for 2008

Livorno has had an increase in cruise traffic in the last year. In 2006, 445 cruise ships called bringing in 607,848 passengers. For 2007, 503 cruise calls have been booked carrying about 660,000 passengers, an increase of 13%. There will be five ships making their maiden calls to Livorno this year: **Carnival Freedom, Navigator of the Seas, Emerald Princess, Norwegian Gem and Legend of the Seas.**

The port is investing €12m in a commercial pier suitable for cruise ships over 300mtr in length. It will be ready for use, after dredging has been completed, at the beginning of 2008. The Cruise Terminal at Livorno, currently used by MSC Cruises for a weekly turnaround, will be restructured to offer new services to the passengers: retail shops, cafeteria and ticket office. The prospected investment costs will be €2.2m.

Livorno has a wide range of historical sites and attractions for the visitor: The Museo Mascagnano houses memorabilia, documents and operas by the great composer Pietro Mascagni, the author of famous opera *Cavalleria Rusticana*. Every year some of his operas are traditionally played during the lyric music season, which is organised by the Traditional Theatre of Livorno, the recently restructured Teatro Goldoni. Up in the hills the Sanctuary of Montenero, which is dedicated to Our Lady of the Graces, the patron of Tuscany, is a fixed destination for pilgrims. It is famous for the adjacent gallery, decorated with ancient ex-voti mainly connected

to stories of a miraculous sea rescue.

The Monumento dei Quattro Mori (Monument of the Four Turks), dedicated to Grand Duke Ferdinando II de' Medici of Tuscany, is one of the most important monuments of Livorno.

Livorno Municipality is in the process of completing the embellishment of the seaside promenade adjacent to Terrazza Mascagni and the restructuring of the new Seaquarium – where you will find beautiful views of the Tuscan Archipelago.



Via Venice

Standing tall



The Moors' Clock Tower, one of the most famous architectural landmarks in Venice's St Mark's Square, has recently re-opened to tourists. Tours have to be booked in advance.

The Moors' Clock Tower stands over an arch that leads into what is the main shopping street of the city, the old Merceria. It marks both a juncture and a division between the various architectural components of St. Mark's Square, which was not only the seat of political and religious power but also a public space and an area of economic activity, a zone that looked out towards the sea and also played a functional role as a hub for the entire layout of the city.

The Tower and its large Astronomical Clock, a masterpiece of technology and engineering, form an essential part of the very image of Venice. For more than five

hundred years, they have measured out the flow of life and history within the city.

Venice continues to break all records with over 470 cruise calls from 81 ships expected in 2007, up from 425 last year.

A new cruise terminal was inaugurated last year and a fifth terminal is planned. A new two-storey terminal of 13,000sq mtr will be located along the Isonzo quay and will enable simultaneous berthing of two high-tonnage ships.





Via Valletta

Grand façade

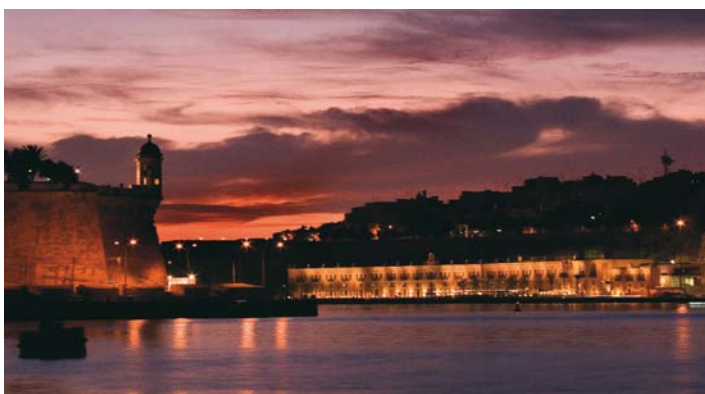
The Valletta Waterfront, the first sight to greet passengers arriving in Malta by cruise ship, is a tourist attraction in its own right. The Valletta Waterfront project is leading to the regeneration of the historic Grand Harbour. When finished it will be a landmark for all tourists visiting Malta and will also offer entertainment alternatives to the local community.

With the option to shop, dine or enjoy a stroll along the water's edge, the Valletta Waterfront gives the tourist a state of what's

waiting just up the hill at the heart of Valletta's city centre.

Valletta is due to welcome over 335 cruise ships bringing around 434,000 passengers in 2007. This will represent around 10% growth compared to last year.

The new Sea Passenger Terminal



has been inaugurated and is being used on a daily basis. A second terminal will be ready in April 2007. The ongoing project will provide the necessary infrastructure and capacity to satisfy the demands of the cruise industry with berthing facilities for five vessels flanked

alongside the magnificent bastions.

The Forni and Pinto Terminals are only 20 minutes away from the Malta International Airport, which is connected to Europe's major hubs. VISET, together with partners MIA and the Malta Tourist Authority, are striving to increase the home port segment of its business. The Valletta Waterfront offers check-in and baggage facilities, portage, tax-free shopping, a tourist information service on site, food and beverage facilities, retail facilities, taxi services as well as a public bus service.

Via Monaco

Racing ahead



Every year, thousands of visitors from around the world are drawn to Monaco's Mediterranean climate, her luxurious beaches, lively casinos and world-renown events. Monaco's harbour – called Port Hercule and located in the heart of the city – offers new facilities on a 350mtr long semi-floating



breakwater. The breakwater provides berthing for cruiseships with a maximum length of 245mtr, or two 100mtr long, and a third cruiseship on the offshore side when the weather is fine.

Monaco is famous for its casino and many visitors come to the area just to visit it. The Casino was built in 1878 and designed by

Charles Garnier, the architect of the Opera House in Paris. The atrium, paved in marble, is surrounded by 28 Ionic columns in onyx. It leads into the auditorium of the opera, called the Salle Garnier, where for more than a century, outstanding international performances of opera, ballet and concerts have been staged.

Another popular tourist attraction is the Oceanographic Museum inaugurated in 1910 by its founder, Prince Albert I. This exceptional museum of marine sciences is a monumental architectural masterpiece with a grandiose façade rising majestically above the sea to a height of 279ft. It took 11 years to build, using 100,000 tons of stone from La Turbie.

Every spring, sports car fans from around the globe descend on the Principality of Monaco to witness the Monaco F1 Grand Prix, one of the few races in the world held on city streets. Spectators delight in the raucous noise of the roaring engines as they speed along the Boulevard Albert I up toward the Casino and dare the hairpin turn in front of the Fairmont Monte Carlo. Organised by the Automobile Club of Monaco, the Monaco Grand Prix is one of the world's most popular international sporting events and takes place each year during the last weekend in May.



Via Koper

Discover one of Europe's newest destinations



Slovenia is one of Europe's newest tourist attractions and the port city of Koper and its surrounding countryside offers passengers a chance

to sample this developing destination.

Located on the Adriatic coast, Koper has mild winters and warm and dry summers. Carved in limestone, old Koper's history dates back to the time of Ancient Greece, but many of the buildings are influenced by Venetian style as trade between Koper

and Venice dated back to 932.

Subsequently Koper fell under Austrian rule and then Italian, but became the only commercial port of Slovenia when the

country gained independence in 1991.

Over 30,000 cruise passengers will experience Koper this summer with a number of ship calls ranging from HAL's Veendam and Fred Olsen's Boudicca to Kristina Cruises' Kristina Regina and Discovery Wold Cruises' Discovery.

Thomson Cruises tempts passengers sailing on board Emerald to wind their way through 'Koper's tangle of labyrinthine streets, lined with shops and bustling cafes perhaps pausing for a lunch. Try traditional specialties such as 'jota', a soup made from pickled cabbage and fresh fish, perhaps washed down by one of the local wines.'

Closeby are the Postojna Caves with their colossal stalactites and stalagmites shimmering within shady tunnels. Passengers can view the colourful grottoes on a small train.

Via Cartagena

Commemorating Francisco Salzillo y Alcazar

In 2007, the city of Murcia commemorates the third centenary of the birth of Francisco Salzillo y Alcazar, one of the greatest Spanish sculptors of the XVIII century, with the exhibition "Salzillo, testigo de un siglo" (Salzillo, testimony of the XVIII century).

The exhibition, which can be visited between March and July, will showcase the life of Francisco Salzillo and his work in the place that made it possible, the city and Kingdom of Murcia, near to the port of Cartagena. A fine selection of the sculptor's work will be exhibited, along with pieces from other great artists of the time, from different points of view: the historic and geographic context of the artist's life, Salzillo as a creator, and Salzillo versus his contemporaries.

The exhibition will have three different venues, all of them located in the city of Murcia: the Salzillo Museum, the Church of Nuestro Padre Jesús and the Parish Church of San Andrés.

Cartagena received 34 cruise calls in 2006 bringing in 29,337 passengers and there are already 45 calls planned for the

2007 season, resulting in at least a 32% increase in cruise calls. There will be eight ships making their maiden calls to Cartagena: Ocean Village 2, Prinsendam, Spirit of Adventure, Wind Star, Seven Seas Navigator, Saga Ruby, Star Princess and Voyager of the Seas.

Port of Cartagena is investing in a 150mtr long extension to the cruise berth, making a total of 500mtr berthing. This will allow two cruise vessels to berth in the Terminal at the same time and for passengers to be just 200mtr away from the city centre.

Cathedral of Murcia





Via Ceuta

Relaxation and a little history



Many passengers opt to walk around the old town, which has numerous viewpoints such as Isabel II and Monte Hacho, offering panoramic views of the harbour and Ceuta Bay. Closeby is Desnarigado Castle–Museum, housing a collection of military objects. The Hermitage of San Antonio, a 16th-century building, which at one time was the residence of the bishop, is located here.

The Cristo de los Afligidos bridge gives access to the old Royal Walls and the San Felipe Ditch, the largest military construction in Ceuta which was an impregnable fortress for centuries.

The “Parque Marítimo del Mediterráneo” (Mediterranean Maritime Park) leisure complex located in Ceuta close to the sea is unequalled in southern Europe.

Built in 1994, it covers an area of 46,000sq mtr where you can find salt lakes, solariums, waterfalls, magnificent gardens and much more. In the middle stands a castle plus a casino, a restaurant and a disco. Cruise passengers can take a walk, swim or just relax in these beautiful surroundings.

Ceuta is expecting around 20 calls this year and has a new cruise terminal in operation, capable of receiving ships over 220mtr in length and up to 1,500–2,000 passengers at one time. The terminal is situated just 100mtr from the city centre. Ceuta is also a duty free shopping location.



Via Palamos

The multi attractions of Costa Brava

Port of Palamos is located on the Costa Brava Spanish coast, an area that has always attracted

visitors for its cultural heritage, beaches, endless sunshine and fantastic food.



The Dalí Museum, the Caldes International Golf Course (P.G.A.), the many medieval towns close to Palamos and the city of Girona, well known for its old Jewish quarter, and one of the best preserved in Europe, are the highlights for sightseeing.

Palamos, with the most important fishing

port in the Girona province and its centuries of history, is an interesting place to visit. The “Museu de la Pesca”, dedicated to the past and present life of the fishermen and their families, protects, promotes and conducts research on the fishing heritage of the Catalan coast.

Palamos is anticipating strength growth in its cruise business this year, with 31 ships scheduled to call, up from 18 in 2006. Windstar Cruises’ three vessels: Wind Surf, Wind Spirit and Wind Star, are all making maiden calls at Palamos this year, as is Thomson Cruises’ Thomson Celebration.

This cruise season the port authority is investing in more staff and resources to assist passengers, tour operators and crew.



Via Valencia

Cruise set to take off in 2007

The cruise sector in Valencia is currently experiencing a period of spectacular growth as a result of the combined efforts of Valencia Tourism and the Port Authority over the last few years. An increase of approximately 400% in cruise calls was recorded between 2001 and 2006. 2007 looks equally promising, and the Port Authority has already received confirmation regarding the arrival of 159 cruise ships to the city. This amounts to a total of 200,000 passengers,

which doubles the figure recorded for 2006. These impressive statistics concerning passenger numbers and traffic volume are unprecedented in the history of the port.

These calls will enjoy the new terminal, which is due to open later this year after extensive refurbishment. As part of the docking bay extension work, the renovation includes the creation of more space for docking cruise ships as well as for passengers. These projects, which are directly related to the city's title as host of the America's Cup, triggered the boost for Valencia's cruise business.

In addition to attending events such as Seatrade Miami and Cruise3sixty (Fort Lauderdale), Valencia Tourism will distribute a new Cruise Guide for professionals, which provides an account of the transformation of the city and its port. A new Tourist Info office at the Cruise Terminal now offers the



same extensive range of services as the city centre offices.

MSC Cruises has decided to homeport MSC Sinfonia and MSC Lirica in Valencia, as well as Pullmantur Cruises with Century. Also calling at Valencia, in 2007, are ships from Royal Caribbean International, WindStar Cruises, ResidenSea, AIDA Cruises, Regent Seven Seas and Silversea Cruises, among others.



Via Tunisia

Gateway to ancient Medina

A walk around Tunis takes you by surprise with its modern conference halls, hotels and banks, bright yellow taxis and all the hustle and bustle of a modern Mediterranean city. Steel and glass blend with the baroque architecture, palm trees, chic boutiques, gardens and cafés.

Starting at the monument of November 7, which marks Tunisia's turn towards the future, one can stroll down the shady tree lined Avenue Habib Bourguiba, with its flower stands, passing bookstores and galleries. Beyond the Cathedral and the statue of Ibn Khaldoun, looms the gateway to the ancient Medina.

As you enter the narrow streets, centuries slip away. Here you will find small shops selling brass, olive wood, leather and brightly coloured garments plus souvenirs, antiques, berber jewellery, carpets and pottery.

The Mosque of the Olive Tree, Ez Zitouna, is located in the heart of the Medina. Rebuilt in the 9th century, the Ez Zitouna was for centuries the focal point of life in the Arab city, as urban planning decreed the order in which the different trades were placed: booksellers, perfumeries, dried fruits sellers and cloth merchants held the privilege of proximity to the Mosque. Today one can still see traces of this tradition –the Souk of the Perfumes, traditional clothing shops, almond and spice sellers are still located alongside its walls.

The medina, or city, is rich in ancient palaces, mosques and centres of trade and learning. It is a living museum. Dar Ben Abdullah, Dar Hussein, Dar El Bey, Dar El Jeld, Dar El Haddad and Dar Othman were once residences of wealthy traders or ministers and now house cultural centres, restaurants or government agencies.





Via Alanya

Perfect holiday getaway



Alanya is one of the most charming holiday resorts on the Turkish Riviera and is only 137km away from the city of Antalya.

With its vast beaches, historic sites, the numerous fish restaurants of its modern hotels and motels and its cafes and bars, Alanya is an outstanding holiday getaway.

The first thing that greets the visitor is the 13th century Seljuk Castle, which sits like a crown atop Alanya Peninsula. Besides the impressive castle, there is the shipyard and the Red Tower. All along the road, which runs alongside the port, are late night cafes and bars and boutiques selling handicrafts, leather clothing, jewellery and handbags.

If you like to explore, then you must see Damlatas Cave and the nearby Ethnography

Museum. By boat you can also reach three other caves: the Phosphorous Cave, with its phosphoric rocks; the Girls Cave, where pirates used to hold their women prisoners; and the Lovers Cave.

The cool shade of Dim Brook Valley, 15km east of Alanya, is an ideal place to get away and relax. The sea all around Alanya is excellent for swimming which makes Alanya a paradise of sun, sea and sand.

Because of its climate, plants from all over the world can be found in Alanya. Some of the most common are oranges, bananas, vegetables of all kinds, tropical fruits such as papaya, guava, avocado, and a variety of dates and coffees. Alanya has a typical Mediterranean climate with hot dry summers.

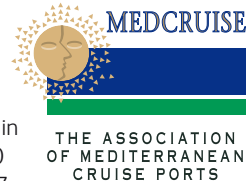
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