

Destination MEDCRUISE

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Via Sinop

Turkish port of Sinop, MedCruise's newest member



Sinop lies on an isthmus linking Boztepe Peninsula to the mainland

The Turkish Black Sea port of Sinop is the newest member of MedCruise, which officially joined the association at the May General Assembly in Sochi.

The city and port of Sinop lies on an isthmus linking the Boztepe Peninsula to the mainland. It is surrounded by azure blue natural deepwater bays on both sides.

According to legend, Sinope was founded by the Amazons, who named it after their queen, Sinova. It ultimately became a flourishing Greek settlement and the birthplace of famous philosopher Diogenes. When the Romans captured the city in 70BC, it was nearly destroyed by fire.

Historic monuments of interest include the town's ancient citadel rebuilt during the Byzantine

and Seljuq periods; some isolated columns and inscribed stones built into the old walls and dating from the early Greek and Roman periods, and the Alâeddin Cami mosque, built in 1214. The foundations of the Temple of Serapis are located in the grounds of the Archaeological Museum where some beautiful golden icons are displayed.

The countryside surrounding Sinop includes miles of natural sandy beaches, thick pine forests, caves and waterfalls. Hamsilos Fjord, 11 kms from the city centre is the only fjord in Turkey.

Locally produced handcrafts include woven textiles, linen and cotton clothing, model ships and knives. The skill of model ship-making dates back to 1950 when two prisoners started teaching the wood carving craft to the local community – today model ships of every style and size in all different types of wood can be

purchased as souvenirs. Four generations of knife-makers have also resided in Sinop, started by the Ozekes family as a hobby in 1890. Decorative kitchen and hunting knives are produced today using steel and animal horn or wood for the handles.

Last year eight cruise ships called at Sinop, including Holland America Line's Prinsendam and Peter Deilmann's Deutschland.



Via Sochi

On Saturday, May 19th, MedCruise delegates attending the general assembly in Sochi were invited by the Olympic Committee of the Russian Federation to visit Krasnaya Polyana, a mountain ski resort expanding under massive investments by the Russian government and private companies.

The visit to the resort, in the Caucasus Mountains, brought the delegates from the



MedCruise delegates at Krasnaya Polyana

sunny beaches of the Black Sea to dramatic snow-capped mountains within less than an hours' drive. The Olympic Committee provided a presentation of the major improvements underway both at Sochi (its airport, its port and its sports venues) and at Krasnaya Polyana, as Sochi is one of three candidate cities for the 2014 Winter Olympic Games, the winner of which will be announced July 4th.



Via Almeria

Hosts of the next General Assembly



Norwegian Jewel at the Spanish port of Almeria

In October MedCruise members are invited to the Spanish port of Almeria which is hosting the next general assembly between 18-19th.

Delegates will get the chance to see the historic city of Almeria and for those who can extend their stay one day, an opportunity to visit the bewitching Alhambra Palace, the top tourist attraction for cruise passengers visiting the port.

Known as the City of Light, the sun shines on Almeria almost the entire year. The must-

see sites to visit are the Alcazaba fortress built in the 10th century to defend the city which provides panoramic views of the surrounding landscape; the Cathedral built on the site of an ancient mosque that was used as a fortress to protect it from pirate attacks; the narrow streets of the old city, a walk through the palm trees of the Nicolas Salmeron Park running parallel to the sea and tapas tasting in the cafes alongside the Mineral Quay.

Less than two hours way is Alhambra and the Royal Nazari Palaces set in the foothills

of the Sierra Nevada. Other attractions nearby include the beaches and salt marshes of Cabo de Gata national park; the Arabic town of Mojacar; Tabernas – considered Europe's only desert where many spaghetti westerns were filmed and Sorbas, a maze of spectacular caves.

Around 50-60 ships bringing 40,000 cruise passengers call at Almeria each year at the port's dedicated cruise berth close to the city centre. Another berth, also close to the town, is also available.

Via Barcelona

Costa inaugurates Palacruceiros in Barcelona

Costa Crociere inaugurated its new Palacruceiros terminal facility at Barcelona's Moll Adossat pier in April.

Chairman and ceo of Costa Crociere, Pier Luigi Foschi; joined by Jordi Valls, president of Barcelona Port Authority; and other high-ranking Catalan regional government and Barcelona municipal authorities, marked the start of service at the new Terminal D with the arrival and departure of 112,000gt, 3,780 passenger Costa Concordia.

Palacruceiros has a surface area of almost 10,000sq mtr on three levels. It incorporates an Internet Cafe, a VIP lounge, Children's Club, shopping area and a cafeteria and terrace with panoramic views over the Mediterranean. Costa Crociere has invested approximately €12m in the new facility, which will handle 126 Costa Crociere vessels' port calls during 2007, bringing a total of 330,000 passengers through the Port of Barcelona.



Palacruceiros at Barcelona's Moll Adossat pier

Based on the European Cruise Council estimate of local expenditure per passenger in Spanish ports of some €45, Costa is forecasted to generate approximately €15m for the Barcelona economy in 2007.

Other Carnival Corp. and plc cruise companies, with preferential berthing at

Palacruceiros, will bring the parent company's total activities at Barcelona during 2007 to 251 vessel calls and some half a million passengers overall.

Barcelona expects to handle some 1,600,000 cruise passengers in 2007, approximately 15% more than in 2006.



Via Portoferraio

Relaxing natural beauty

Portoferraio, capital of Elba, the largest island in the Tuscan archipelago receives around 80 cruise ship calls a year.

Strategically located between the city ports of Civitavecchia to the south and Livorno to the north, Portoferraio promotes itself to cruise line itinerary planners as an island escape offering relaxing natural beauty together with history and culture.

The port lies within the town itself and the deep water quay, where the majority of ships tie up, is just a stone's throw from the historic centre.

Passengers disembarking by foot can stroll along the promenade of the Medicean town between fashionable boutiques and small restaurants.

Napoleon Bonaparte, who was exiled in Elba between 1814 and 1815, left many traces including two residences: Villa dei



Mulini containing period furniture, autographed letters and various paintings and the summer residence at San Martino, just four miles away. Both are now national museums open to visitors.

Alternatively passengers can venture inland to small villages hidden away on mountainous slopes amid green chestnut forests to enjoy some local wine or admire the villages strung

along the coast, overlooking the sparkling Mediterranean Sea.

Currently the biggest ship to berth alongside has been Hapag Lloyd's 199mtr long Europa. The port is currently awaiting the approval from Italy's Ministry of Infrastructure to extend the existing quay by 65mtr to provide a 180mtr long cruise berth, which would take two years to finish.

Via Trieste

Trieste goes for growth



Marina is also homeporting every Sunday throughout this summer.

In 2008, the port is looking to host at least 55 calls including the arrival of 2,700 passenger Costa Magica which will be deployed on a weekly cruise programme using Trieste as a base port.

The cruise terminal is located just a short walk from the city centre. It has a 210mtr long quay alongside but there are plans to extend this quay by 220mtr which should be operational by 2010. In the meantime dolphins will be used to host bigger ships.

Trieste, located just 100km from Venice, is keen to promote itself as an alternative Adriatic home port. Currently it handles

60,000 passengers, more than 90% of which are turnarounds.

For passengers arriving on a transit call or for pre and post stays the must-see shorex include a walking tour of Trieste and a wine excursion, either on bikes or by horse to the local wine cellars. Slovenia is only 12km away and Croatia 25km both of which are reachable on a one day tour.

On May 3rd this year Trieste Terminal Passeggeri (TTP) was formed by Trieste Port Authority to manage and develop cruise-related business at the Adriatic port.

On the first day of 2008, TTP will become a joint stock company with private investors taking shares in the company. The port authority is

currently negotiating with several companies, including some cruise line customers, who are interested in becoming stakeholders.

In 2007, Trieste will welcome 38 cruise calls up from 30 last year. MSC Cruises is using Trieste as a home port for the first time positioning MSC Opera from September on weekly Adriatic/Aegean cruises. Costa Crociere's Costa



Via Batumi



The dolphin is the symbol of Batumi

The Black Sea city of Batumi is a popular holiday destination for Georgians due to its warm, sub-tropical climate. Located on a bay lined with sweeping beaches this colourful city boasts palms, cypress and citrus trees abundant with fruits and flowerbeds that bloom year-round. Closeby are the Botanical Gardens containing more than 4,000 species of flora from around the world.

More than 137,000 people live in Batumi, the administrative centre of the Adjara region – a combination of highland and coastal areas of outstanding natural beauty.

A typical tour around Batumi takes in a visit to the Botanical Gardens and Gonio Fortress, built in the first century by the Romans and one of the main forts on the Black Sea coast. It was from here that the Argonauts sailed on the Golden Fleece. The state museum of Batumi houses items found in and around Gonio, including jewellery and objects made of gold.

The old city of Batumi dates back 150 years. Here you can see coffee-making machines, as well as coffee mills, being manufactured and used producing an aroma that is hard to resist. There are lots of open cafes where locals and tourists gather to drink aromatic coffee. The harbour hosts fishermen of all ages.

Batumi is a multipurpose port with two 220mtr long dedicated berths for passenger ships, including one with a terminal alongside.

Batumi has been chosen as a port of call by Voyages of Discovery both this year and in 2008. The 610-passenger cruise ship will call on October 14, 2007 as part of a 12-day Black Sea Discovery cruise. In October 2008, this cruise is being repeated twice during the month.

Via Azores

In the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, between Europe and North America, lies the volcanic archipelago of the Azores, nine dazzling islands with unspoilt landscapes. Each island has a unique character, some with luxuriant vegetation and astonishing lakes, others with black carved rocks, and others filled with tradition and history.

Azores' major city and port, Ponta Delgada, is constructing a new cruise and passenger terminal, aimed at making the archipelago a mandatory stopping point for cruise ships sailing the transatlantic routes. This infrastructure is expected to be completed in April/May next year.

The Cruise Liner Maritime Terminal, will offer a dedicated quay measuring 380mtr long with 11mtr water depth alongside. Passengers will embark/disembark via a gangway connected to the terminal building which is located a few hundred metres from the city centre, accessed via a newly-laid promenade. Parking for excursion buses will be located above the terminal.

The 1,200sq mtr Maritime Terminal and adjacent 5,300 sq mtr Commercial Zone is designed to serve both inter-island traffic and



Artists impression of the new 'Gateways of the Sea'

visiting cruise ships. It also includes The Sea Pavillion – a grand plaza, with a cafe, terrace, and a restaurant overlooking the sea. Music events will take place on a nearby 4,000sq mtr stage whilst swimming pools filled with Atlantic waters can be safely and fully enjoyed.

A new marina has been built with capacity to berth 470 yachts.

All these new facilities are collectively known as Portas do Mar, the new Gateways Of The Sea.

Ponta Delgada is a vibrant town which received 45 cruise calls last year and expected to rise to 57 carrying around 70,000 passengers in 2007. Also worth a visit are the islands of Terceira, a UNESCO World Heritage site for the architecture of its main town, and Faial, the Atlantic meeting-point for yachts from all over the world.

Visit Ponta Delgada's new Gateways of the Sea and you'll experience a fun-filled mid-Atlantic stopover.

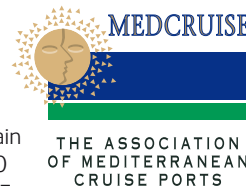
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