

Destination MEDCRUISE

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New members

Welcoming Genoa, Odessa and Motril as new members

Odesa has re-joined MedCruise bringing the number of Black Sea ports in the Association to six.

Situated on rolling hills overlooking a small harbour, Odessa is the fifth largest city in Ukraine and the most important sea port and centre of industry, science and culture. A mild climate, warm waters and sunlit beaches attract thousands of tourists year around. The city displays a mixture of different styles of architecture, ranging from Art Nouveau to Renaissance and Classicist.

In 2008, Odessa Commercial Sea Port is expecting 163 cruise calls and over 118,000 passengers; this compares to 157 calls and 105,000 passengers in 2007.

Some of the most popular tours taken by passengers visiting the city are: Odessa Highlights; the Catacombs; Odessa Palaces; Odessa Port: Yesterday, today, tomorrow and the Belgorod-Dnestrovskiy fortress, dating from the 13–15th century.

Italian port of Genoa has also re-joined MedCruise, under the membership of Stazioni Marittime SpA, the port's pioneering passenger terminal operator which celebrated its 20th anniversary last year. Genoa's cruise and ferry business over the past couple of years has recorded an impressive rate of growth. In 2008, a 12% rise in cruise traffic is predicted



Odessa – fifth largest city in Ukraine

with over 270 visits. New visitors in 2008 include MSC Cruises' MSC Poesia and arriving in November is MSC Fantasia – purpose-built for year-round Med cruising. MSC will call in Genoa over 140 times in 2008, representing a total of 420,000 passenger movements and including 420,000 transit passengers.

Genoa city is very easy to get around. Must-see sights are the Palazzo Ducale, the best-known building in the city built in the 13th century and the Piazza de Ferrari, at the heart of the city with its many fountains and close to the shopping area. A pleasant walk down by the marina is also where Genoa's Aquarium is located, the largest in Europe housing over 600 different species of fish and reptiles.

Meanwhile Motril, located on the Andalucian coast is the latest Spanish port to seek MedCruise membership. Offering three quays, it is an excellent gateway for visiting the Alhambra Palace in Granada (45 minutes away) but also has some interesting historic places in the city itself, with its mix of Phoenician, Roman and Arab cultures. Other places of interest closeby are Salobrena (10 minutes away), a town packed with whitewashed houses clinging to the rocks just back from the shoreline, topped by a Moorish castle and surrounded by sugar cane plantations and for winter Med itineraries in particular, the Sierra Nevada ski resort is just 1 hr 30 minutes from the port area.



Genoa – accessible city



Sierra Nevada winter shorex from Motril

PHOTO: G. L. BIRCH



Via Barcelona

Building a strong promotion platform



La Pedrera, a Gaudi building in Barcelona

In recent years, Barcelona has become one of Europe's top five tourist cities spurred by business tourism, meetings tourism, city breaks and cruise tourism.

In 2007, Barcelona welcomed 7.1m tourists who accounted for 13.6m overnight stays in the city's hotels. The direct impact of tourist activity on the city's economy represented 14% of the GDP.

As a result 300 hotels, four convention centres, the airport and trade fair, Fira de

Barcelona, are all currently undergoing major expansion programmes whilst the new high-speed train link with Madrid and state-of-the-art cruise facilities, promoted by the Port Authority, are helping to meet demand.

Cruise tourism is one of the fastest-growing segments: in 1990 Barcelona welcomed just over 100,000 passengers, whereas this year the number is set to reach 2m. And the good news is 55% are passengers who embark and/or disembark in the port, many of them choosing

to take a pre- or post-cruise break in the city.

Turisme de Barcelona, the first tourist board to become an associate member of MedCruise, is very aware that cruise tourism is important for the city. This is why it has been working in association with the Port Authority since 1995 to secure Barcelona's position as a major cruise hub. It has taken part in Seatrade exhibitions, organised inspection and press trips, circulated information to companies and to arriving passengers.

'We are totally committed to the cruise sector and view positively the changes made to the MedCruise statutes which enable tourist offices to become associate members. This is the best way for us to become more involved in promotion and keep abreast of the latest developments,' says Josep A. Rojas Diago, Promotions Manager, Turisme de Barcelona.

'Experience has taught us that it is essential for the different agents involved in the business to work in a coordinated way, with long-term strategies, in order to attain a leading position in a sector. And in Barcelona, we can demonstrate the success of this joint collaboration with results,' he adds.

Via Cartagena

Cruise-friendly shopping

As a result of the increasing number of cruise calls in Cartagena, the Port Authority is implementing numerous projects to ensure its continuing appeal as an important Mediterranean transit stop.

The cruise terminal quay will be extended from the current length of 344mtr to 500mtr with the buses, taxis and information point facilities increasing from 3,000sq mtr in area to 4,500sq mtr.

A new project, which was presented on May 7, is the Cruises Friend Shop. This initiative, established by the Chamber of Commerce, the City Hall, the Association of Shops in the city centre and the Port Authority, is a unique undertaking where the associated partners guarantee the opening of their establishments when a cruiseship with more



than 300 passengers calls in Cartagena.

Disembarking passengers are presented with a city map indicating where the tourist

attractions, as well the participating shops, are located at the Cruise Terminal Information desk upon their arrival.



New quay means no tidal constraints

The Algarve port of Portimão inaugurated a new cruise quay in April that enables large cruise ships to come alongside without any tidal constraints.

The dredging work has re-established a depth of 8mtr, both in the access channel and in the turning (350mtr diameter) and berthing basins, ensuring safe conditions for the passage of all ships over 210mtr in length.

In practice, almost all the ships that currently call at Portimão can dock at the quay, instead of anchoring off shore, providing greater safety and comfort for passengers.

The project involved removing more than 435,000cu mtr of sand and mud which has been deposited off the coast under strict environmental rules, supervised by the National Institute of Biological Resources at a cost of €47,000. The contract included the monitoring of surface water quality and effect on organisms, both at the dredging site and at the sites where the spoils are deposited.

Portimão's new cruise quay



Lisbon welcomes largest cruiseship to visit



Independence of the Seas is welcomed on its first call to Lisbon in May

Independence of the Seas, Royal Caribbean International's newest ship, became the largest cruiseship ever to visit the Portuguese capital, when she arrived in Lisbon on May 14.

The 158,000gt vessel was escorted by tug boats spraying streams of water into the air as she made her way to her berth at the

Alcântara Cruise Terminal.

As has become tradition for a ship's first call to Lisbon, Independence of the Seas' passengers were welcomed by dockside entertainers including mono-cyclists and stilt-walkers and musicians. The Lisbon Port Authority (APL) also gave guests a small souvenir and the ship's

captain was presented with a commemorative plaque to mark the occasion.

Independence of the Seas, named in Southampton on the last day of April, will conduct a series of Mediterranean cruises this summer from her UK homeport, until the end of October, including 13 stops at Lisbon.



Valletta

Valletta bags two awards

Malta's Port of Valletta bagged two prestigious awards by Dream World Cruise at this year Seatrade Cruise Shipping Convention held in Miami.

VISET Malta plc received the awards for 'Most Improved Port Facilities' and 'Most Improved Destination' for the year 2007. 'Most Improved Port Facilities' award acknowledged the improvement seen in the cruise product, such as berthing facilities and infrastructure as well as parking and related services, whilst the 'Most Improved Destination' award was for improved landscaping, transport facilities as well as new attractions and experiences.

Malta has been participating at Miami since 2001 and together with the Malta Tourism Authority, VISET focused on the promotion of the Maltese Islands as the gateway to all year round Mediterranean cruising as well as a competitive homeport.



VISET's Chris Paris

VISET Malta plc are the developers and operators of the Valletta Cruise and Ferry Terminal inaugurated in 2005 and incorporating two terminals, turnaround facilities as well as Internet and telephony services.

The Valletta Waterfront also contains a fusion of dining and retail outlets, as well as anchor attractions, including Malta's own Carnival Museum, Seaplane service and traditional 'Dghajsa' Harbour boat tours.

Tura Turizm



Fidelio Cruises' Tony Heuer presents Tura Turizm chairman Erkunt Oner

A quick reminder to all MedCruise members and Associate members that the Seatrade Insider Cruise Awards 2008 will be presented during Seatrade Med 2008 in Venice, December 9th-11th.

MedCruise associate Tura Turizm won Supplier of the Year in 2007 and is sponsoring the category in this year's scheme.

Amongst the categories in 2008 are: Port of the Year (sponsored by Instone International), Destination of the Year, Supplier of the Year (sponsored by Tura Turizm), Innovative Shore and Environmental Initiative Award (sponsored by Port of Dover).

It's very simple to enter and nominations must be submitted via e-mail. A panel of experienced judges will select the winners. Click on Seatrade Insider news pages to find out how to enter.

Malaga competition winner

The winner of this year's MedCruise competition, sponsored by Port of Malaga, is Mathias Ludwig, port operations manager of AIDA Cruises.

The prize includes air travel to and from Spain for two persons and two nights bed and breakfast. The lucky winner will get a chance to visit the port area and nearby historic city centre, featuring Picasso's Museum and birthplace, as well as nearby beautiful locations such as Nerja, Marvella and Ronda.

The number of cruise passengers visiting in the city rose to 292,567 last year as 240 ships called, making Malaga Spain's second most popular cruise port. Additionally, it is becoming a popular homeport with 24 ships and over 12,000 passengers starting or finishing their cruise in the port in 2007.

The inauguration of the new Passenger Terminal and its south berth will contribute to increasing this kind of traffic in the Port of Málaga and its consolidation as a homeport.

We wish Mathias a good and fruitful trip to Spain's Costa del Sol.



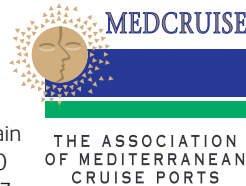
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- Bari
- Batumi
- Cagliari
- Cartagena
- Castellon
- Catania
- Ceuta
- Civitavecchia
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- Dubrovnik, Korcula
- Egyptian ports
- French Riviera ports
- Genoa
- Gibraltar
- Koper
- La Spezia
- Lattakia
- Livorno
- Malaga
- Messina
- Monaco
- Moroccan ports
- Motril
- Naples
- Odessa
- Palamos
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- Tunis
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- Valletta
- Venice
- Volos
- Zadar

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