

MEDCRUISE NEWS

QUARTERLY MARCH 2008

ISSUE 19

Trieste to host 32nd General Assembly between May 21-23rd 2008

Trieste welcome for MedCruise



The Port of Trieste is hosting the next MedCruise general assembly between May 21-23rd, 2008. This year the Adriatic destination is expecting more than 50 ships to call including regulars MSC Cruises, Costa Cruises and Cunard – all with bigger ships plus some which will visit for

the first time from Hebridean International, Crystal Cruises, Sea Cloud Cruises and Windstar.

A new Maritime Station at Molo IV for cruise ships and fast ferry connections is located in the heart of the city.

Passengers arriving this year have an opportunity to use fast connections by sea to

Croatia and vice-versa, passengers arriving on ships in Venice can reach Trieste on a day tour using a direct train which was inaugurated last September.

Popular shorexcs taken by passengers calling Trieste are the Coffee Tour (Trieste is the most important city in Europe for coffee), churches (including Serbian, Orthodox, Greek-Orthodox and the Catholic Cathedral), castles (San Giusto, Miramare and Duino), vineyard visits in the famous Collio region and the theatre.

Starting this year any passengers able to include an overnight stay in Trieste could also incorporate a visit to the operetta.



Trieste's Piazza Unità

Royal appointment



Queen Victoria naming ceremony

Albert Poggio, svp of MedCruise and the UK director for the Gibraltar Tourist Board was among 2,000 invited guests at the naming ceremony and luncheon held for the launch of Cunard's new liner Queen Victoria.

The vessel which will be sailing in the Med this summer was named by HRH The Duchess of Cornwall in the presence of HRH The Prince of Wales, during a spectacular ceremony held in Southampton on December 10, 2007.

Pictured right is Albert with Carol Marlow, president and managing director of Cunard and left Camilla conducts her godmother duties watched carefully by Charles.



Albert Poggio with Carol Marlow

Almeria

61 calls expected in 2008



P&O Cruises Aurora and Oriana are two new visitors to the port of Almeria this year. A third newcomer will be AIDA Cruises' AIDAcara arriving on December 23. In 2008, Almeria is expecting 61 calls which represents six more calls than last year when 37,500 passengers arrived on 55 calls.

A tour to the Alhambra Palace is the most popular excursion for cruise passengers arriving in Almeria. Just 2 hours drive away the history of the Alhambra is linked with the geographical place where it is located: Granada. On a rocky hill surrounded by woods, among the oldest quarters in the city, the Alhambra rises up like an imposing castle with reddish tones in its ramparts that prevent the outside world from seeing the beauty they enclose.

The complex of monuments also has an independent palace opposite the Alhambra, surrounded by orchards and gardens, which was where the Granadine kings relaxed: the Generalife.

Passengers who do not join that excursion to Granada can also have a wonderful time taking the "Almeria City Tour" or the "Cabo de Gata Tour". In the first one, we leave the quayside for a walk through the center of the town to visit the Cathedral Fortress which dates from the 16th and 17th centuries and was built in this form as a defence against the raids of the barbary pirates. The overall design is Gothic. Next visit will be the immense Arab Fortress, the Alcazaba, dating from the early 10th century which dominates the town. There is a splendid view of the town and coastline.

The "Cabo de Gata Tour", will depart from Almeria to the Natural Park of Cabo de Gata, the major ecological attraction in Almeria. Contrasting dramatically with the arid, volcanic inland mountains, the shoreline is composed of sand dunes and salt pans, making it the leading wetland of Almeria Province, and giving a unique spectacle of light and forms above and below water.

Palermo



Renovation plans ready

Palermo is planning to invest between €12-15m on transforming its existing Maritime Station into a first-class passenger terminal. The plans are ready and the renovation should be completed by 2010.

210 calls are scheduled for 2008 compared to 214 in 2007 when passenger numbers accounted for 471,074.

MSC Orchestra is scheduled to call 34 times in 2008 replacing the calls of MSC Musica last year. Royal Caribbean International's Navigator of the Seas will visit six times.

Split

Extended berthing

Port of Split completed the extension of St Peter's Pier (Sveti Petar) last year. The 146mtr long extension enables the simultaneous handling of one cruise ship (or ferry) and three to four catamarans for local traffic.

Split looks set to increase its cruise calls once again in 2008 following a 20% rise in 2007. A total of 278 ships are scheduled, compared to 200 last year. Newcomers in 2008 range from the newest to some of the oldest ships currently in service. Maxim Gorkiy and QE2 will visit for the first time as will Celebrity Quest and MSC Musica.

Pictured is the extended St Peter's Pier during a visit last summer of Dalmacija, Seabourn Spirit and Royal Princess with other ships from the Croatian national shipping company Jadrolinija.



Tunis

New piers and tourist village

Construction of two new berths at Tunis port is underway with the first 320mtr long section due to be finished in June of this year. The entire project, including a second 320mtr long pier and tourist village, will be operational in time for the peak 2009 season.

These new facilities will increase the port's handling capacity, offer improved facilities for transiting passengers as well as speed up transfer times and, most important, enhance security operations enabling the entire area to be fully ISPS compliant.

520 calls are scheduled to arrive in Tunis this year compared to 459 in 2007. Passenger numbers are set to rise above the 721,892 handled last year.

A whole host of new ships will call in Tunisia in 2008 including Thomson Celebration, AIDAdiva, MSC Musica, MSC Orchestra, Louis Cruise's Perla and ResidenSea's The World.



Cyprus

Cruise visitors up 10%

During 2007 Cyprus Ports received 222 cruise calls carrying 255,236 passengers. This represents a rise of 10% in cruise visitors the bulk of whom arrived in Lemesos (Limassol). In line with the port's annual growth pattern Lemesos is expecting an 8-10% increase in calls for this year.

Cyprus Ports Authority is planning a new passenger terminal at Lemesos which is scheduled to be finished by 2011. The port can already accommodate ships of any size.



Barcelona

Terminal A opening



In April 2008 the brand new Terminal A will be operational (see rendering below). The 6,200 sq mtr terminal incorporates the latest facilities to match security requirements, passenger safety and comfort and baggage processing.

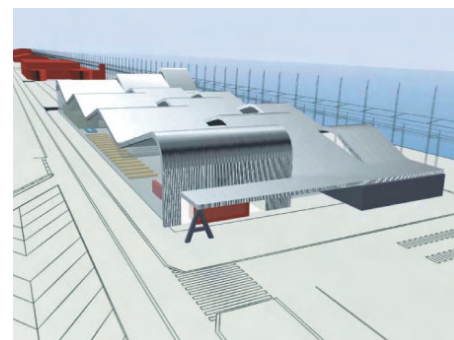
Designed to cater for megaships with over 4,000 passengers, a 400mtr gangway will link Terminals A and B, enabling the handling of a Genesis-class ship with half the passengers using Terminal A and the other half using Terminal B. Total investment by Creuers del Port de Barcelona is almost €15m.

Barcelona is on track for another record year with 900 calls expected in 2008. This follows a successful 2007 when total cruise passengers numbered 1,768,306, a 25.6% gain (1.4m in 2006). Of these, 969,851 were embarking or disembarking base port pax, up 24%, and 798,455 in transit.

Vessel calls totaled 817, up 14.4% from 714. Peak months were 116 in October and 115 in May as some ships transited to/from the Med and Caribbean.

In six consecutive months May–October inclusive, the port handled more than 200,000 passengers monthly. April and November each saw more than 100,000.

Reflecting the already lengthening season and growth in the low season December had 30 vessel calls compared to 18 in the December 2006 carrying 68,000 passengers, an increase of 144% from 28,000 in 12/06.



Cartagena



Cartagena is ready!

In 2007, the port of Cartagena received a total of 43 cruise calls and 39,799 passengers, a 26% increase compared to last year when 34 ships called at the Spanish port bringing in 29,337 passengers.

An historic event last year was the call of three cruise vessels on the same day, Voyager of the Seas, Galaxy and Star Princess, that brought over 7,000 passengers to the city. These calls were also the maiden calls for the three ships, as well as Royal Caribbean's first time visiting the city. Other new callers last year were Ocean Village Two, Prinsendam, Saga Ruby, Seven Seas Navigator, Spirit of Adventure, Wind Star and La Belle de l'Adriatique.

As of today, the port offers a 344mtr long cruise quay and a 12mtr draught, enabling any size cruise vessel to berth, with an area of 3,000sq mtr for buses, taxis and an information point. To cater for the increase in cruise business, the Port Authority is investing in a 150mtr long extension to the cruise berth, making a total of 500mtr of berthing over a 4,500sq mtr area. In addition, Cartagena's natural harbour offers three other quays with a berthing line of more than 300mtr.



Koper

€8m terminal underway

Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia

An ancient Mediterranean town, the Slovenian city of Koper lies on the northern coast of the Adriatic. Koper's rich Venetian renaissance tradition is well preserved, and its many squares and townhouses bear witness to its long history as an important city of the thousand-year republic.

Koper is a convenient home port and transit call for cruises and enjoys excellent motorway and rail links with the Central European hinterland (Austria, Germany, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary) whilst Italy is less than ten kilometres away. There are also two international airports less than an hour's drive away.

80 cruise calls are expected this year at the passenger terminal which is located just a three minute walk away from Koper's central square with its cathedral, Venetian Praetorian Palace and Loggia, as well as old town cafes and restaurants.

A new €8m passenger terminal is planned which will be ready for the start of the 2009 season.

Rijeka

New facility fully functional



Port of Rijeka plans to inaugurate its new passenger terminal. Already well on the way to completion, the main building should be fully functional in 2009 as part of a major port expansion and modernisation plan.

The reconstructed passenger port will also feature a nautical centre and road connecting the area to the city. The existing trade port areas will be redesigned and urbanised to create new commercial activities to benefit the local community and business.

An eight-screen multiplex cinema has been opened this year in the large indoor shopping complex (the biggest in Croatia) called Tower Centre Rijeka. The mall consists of commercial and leisure facilities spanning eight levels – five above ground and includes over 150 stores, hypermarket, bowling alley, casino and gallery.

Cagliari

New facility at Ichnusa Pier



Sardinian port of Cagliari is set to receive around 100 cruise ships this year at its newly refurbished Ichnusa Pier which also incorporates a new cruise terminal.

The two-storey multifunctional building is located at the end of 325mtr long Ichnusa Pier with depths alongside of between 9 to 9.5mtr. The port has been undergoing major reconstruction work at all piers in the past two years and inauguration of the new facility 'is good news for us and for the destination's future growth potential,' notes marketing manager Valeria Mangiarotti, who is also vp of MedCruise.

This year Royal Caribbean International's newest ship Independence of the Seas becomes a regular summer visitor so passenger numbers which totaled just over 60,000 last year are set for another big rise. 'We are classed as a small port but with good facilities capable of handling the biggest ships (with commercial berths up to 12mtr draft) and with congestion such a big issue in the West Med, we feel there is an opportunity for Cagliari to attract more cruise business,' states Mangiarotti.

Venice

Calls expected to top 567

Art exhibitions such as Rome and the Barbarians at Palazzo Grassi, the Movie Festival, opera at Fenice Theatre, Helicopter flights over the Lagoon and traditional feasts such as Redentore or the Historical Regatta are just some of the numerous and varied attractions awaiting passengers arriving in Venice this year.

Cruise calls are expected to top 567, a rise of 11% compared to 2007 when just over one million passengers passed through Venezia Terminal Passeggeri (VTP).

Cruise-related activity in the city will extend right through to the end of the year when Venice hosts the 2008 edition of Seatrade Med between December 9-11th.

14 new ships will call at the Adriatic city



for the first time in 2008 including Queen Victoria, MSC Poesia, Carnival Splendor, Norwegian Jade and P&O Cruises' new delivery Ventura.

VTP has started work on building a new two-storey cruise terminal of 13,000sq mtr. Located along Isonzo Quay it will enable the simultaneous berthing of two high-tonnage ships. It will also have two bridges to speed up passenger transits. The new facility, Venice's fifth passenger terminal, will be ready at the end of this year.

French Riviera

Cruise Club celebrates



The French Riviera Cruise Club is celebrating its first year of operation. The founding members: French Riviera Tourist Board, Riviera Ports Authority Chamber of Commerce, Cannes, Nice and Villefranche Tourist Boards and the cities of Cannes, Nice and Villefranche have joined forces with associate members who are working in the local cruise business to present a one stop shop to promote the Cote d'Azur as a cruise destination and to raise awareness of the economic benefit of cruise ship calls to local decision makers.

In 2007, 650,000 cruise passengers were welcomed at the three ports representing an increase of 4% compared to the previous year.

According to a FRCC survey more than 50% arrived to the French Riviera for the first time and 90% of them said they would like to return on their own for a land vacation.

The Cruise Club cites recent achievements such as publishing a new sales manual with excursion suggestions, organising individualised welcomes for cruise passengers and homogeneous welcome procedures at all three ports. Last year the FRCC launched its all-English official website at www.frcc.fr.

This year the French Riviera Cruise Club will be promoting the destination to cruise line executives at Seatrade Miami and Seatrade Med in Venice and was represented at the recent Seatrade Winter Cruising Forum in Malta. Amongst priorities this year are to sign a members charter with local professionals such as tourist offices, agents, pilots, taxi companies, hotels and shops.

Alanya

Antalya access



Alanya is located in Antalya – one of Turkey's most popular tourist regions, which accounts for a third of all incoming tourism to the country.

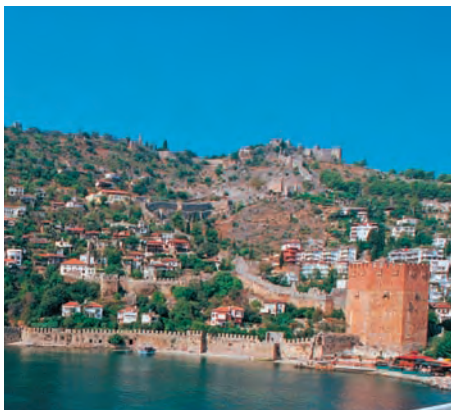
That figure is expected to grow soon too as Gazipasa airport, situated just 45km from Alanya, will open to international flights in the near future.

In 2007, Alanya hosted 124 cruise calls and almost 100,000 passengers plus ten and a half thousand fast ferry passengers.

Up to six cruise ships can be handled at any given time at the port's 533mtr long jetty in the heart of the city which is well sheltered by a high promontory. Depths alongside range from 5 to 15mtr.

One of the most attractive spots is Alanya Castle which overlooks the town on both sides. The castle walls rise up 6.5km to the Inner Castle on the hill which was originally built during the Hellenistic period but fortified and furnished with 110 towers during the Seljukid period.

In 2008, the city of Alanya will be represented at many of Europe's leading travel and tourism fairs and exhibitions including ITB Berlin, MITT Moscow, ITF Slovakia and Tur Goteborg.



Egypt

Increased traffic all-round

The Egyptian ports of Alexandria, Port Said and Sharm el Sheikh are all expecting an increase in cruise traffic this year.

In 2007, 193,634 passengers arrived in Alexandria on 155 ships, including 22 vessels that visited for the first time. In 2008, the number of vessels is expected to number 175. The port is investing in a new passenger terminal and railway station that will link the port with the tourist area of the city.

Meanwhile Port Said handled 116 ships last year and 219,412 passengers.



Most passengers calling either took a Port Said city tour which includes a folklore display by local dancers and musicians or they visited Cairo to see the pyramids, Sphinx, museums and other tourist attractions

in Luxor and Aswan.

88 cruise ships called at the Red Sea port of Sharm El Sheikh bringing 127,909 passengers and 100 are scheduled to visit in 2008.

Sete

On your marks, get Sete



Sete Cruise Club reports 18 ships are expected to visit the town, also known as Languedoc's Little Venice this year. With its typical districts criss-crossed by canals reflecting the colourful facades on the sun-drenched quays, Sete is both a seaside resort and a busy town with shops open all year round.

Ships up to 219mtr in length can dock at Quai d'Alger near the town centre whilst Colbert Dock can handle ships with a maximum length of 240mtr. There is also a secure anchorage in the harbour for larger vessels which can tender passengers, a journey that takes 15 minutes.

The most popular excursions are the walled city of Carcassonne, Montpellier and Pezenas. Please note Sete Cruise Club executives have new e-mail and telephone numbers and can be contacted on the following:

Henri Cournon +33 (0) 467463501 cournon.henri@cr-languedocroussillon.fr; Catherine Lafon + 33 (0) 467463502 catherine.lafon@cr-languedocroussillon.fr

Dubrovnik

12% hike in ship calls

Dubrovnik is expecting 750,000 passengers to pass through the port this year on 680 calls. This represents a rise of 12% in ships and a 10% hike in passenger numbers.

Meanwhile a major upgrade of the port's passenger handling facilities continues. The first phase, which included the reconstruction and redevelopment of the operational berths, is complete, allowing the port to accommodate three large ships alongside at the same time.

The second phase, estimated to cost €100m, includes a new passenger terminal and leisure complex, hotels and shopping centre.

The port authority is planning to begin the project in 2010. A new ferry terminal is also planned, which should be completed by 2012.

One of Oceania Cruises' most popular ports, Dubrovnik will see 22 calls from the line in 2008 whilst Windstar Cruises will add new Adriatic routes between Venice and Dubrovnik in 2008. All three Windstar ships will operate in the Mediterranean from March through November. Wind Surf sails seven-day itineraries in the Western Med from Lisbon, Barcelona, Civitavecchia, Nice, Monte Carlo, Venice and Dubrovnik. Carnival Cruise Lines' newest ship Splendor will debut in 2008 too.



Naples

Naples passes one million passengers milestone



Over one million cruise passengers called in Naples last year on 650 calls. A number of new ships arriving in 2008 will take the number of calls to over 670 including a duo from MSC Cruises: MSC Poesia and MSC Fantasia, plus Carnival Cruise Lines' newbuild Carnival Splendor. Other ships paying maiden visits include Cunard's Queen Victoria, Costa Cruises Costa Serena, Celebrity's Summit, RCI's Navigator of the Seas, NCL's Norwegian Jade and Holland America Lines' Zuiderdam.

Operational upgrades to be introduced this year will ease embarkation/disembarkation and transit of passengers. The port authority has also invested in new fenders.

In a bid to relieve congestion around the port area, ferry traffic operations have been separated permitting only fast ferries carrying foot passengers linking the islands of Capri, Ischia, Procida or the Gulf to operate from Beverello quay (near the cruise terminal) whilst all commercial vehicles and private cars going to the islands will embark/disembark at Calata Porta Massa, an old jute building which has been renovated and transformed into a new ferry terminal with a bar, restaurants and waiting rooms.

Bassani

Bassani signs Chorus deal



16 Venetian churches in Chorus network

MedCruise associate member Bassani, cruise ground handler and shipping agent operating along Italy's Adriatic coast, has signed an agreement with Chorus, one of the most important religious associations in Venice where the company is headquartered.

Chorus is a network of 16 churches in Venice containing a heritage of more than 1,000 works of art. The three-year agreement allows Bassani to offer cruise lines an extremely competitive price on the Chorus pass (official price €9), a ticket giving access to all member churches.

Filippo Olivetti, managing director of Bassani, says, 'I am very pleased with this agreement as it gives cruise lines and passengers taking part in this program the possibility to promote and participate in the preservation and enhancement of this patrimony, as shown by the sentence written in every ticket: "this is a contribution to the maintenance of the churches of Venice".'



Bassani are an associate member of MedCruise. News from other associate members: European Cruise Council, Mykonos S.C. a R.L., Turisme de Barcelona, Afrimar Tunisia, Carimar Shipping Agency, Intercruises Shoreside & Port Services, MH Bland, Navlomar Maritime, P&B Agencies, Samer & Co Shipping and Tura Turizm will appear in future issues of this newsletter throughout 2008.

Seatrade Winter Cruising Forum, Malta January 17-18th 2008



Winter wonderland

MedCruise was a supporting organisation of the recent **Seatrade Winter Cruising Forum** held in Valletta, Malta. Year-round cruising in the Med is now a mainstream product. In addition to record numbers of ships and passengers visiting the region in summer, capacity operating during the winter months rose to around 37,000 lower beds in December 2007, reported Bill Gibbons, director of the Passenger Shipping Association.

Currently Costa, MSC Cruises, Pullmantur and Iberocruceros offer low season cruise programmes targeting mainly Continental European passengers. Gibbons called the year-round presence of Royal Caribbean International's Brilliance of the Seas in

Louis Hellenic Cruises. To assist the marketers MedCruise president Laurent Monsaingeon (pictured below) showed slides of Cartagena, Dubrovnik and Palma, all taken in the previous few weeks depicting clear skies, open shops and fewer people in the streets. 'It is more appropriate to call it low season cruising which is less about beaches and more about culture, vistas and cities,' he affirmed.



Roberto Perocchio (pictured below), managing director of Venezia Terminal Passeggeri, spoke of ensuring safe and warm transits for cruisers in bad weather. Next winter Venice will have heated passenger bridges for accessing the ships from shore, he remarked.



Looking at the appeal of winter cruising, MedCruise svp Albert Poggio spoke of new and different shore excursion opportunities. He pointed to ski-ing in the French Riviera Alps, Sierra Nevada and Koper, 'all within two hours of member ports'.

Principal supporter of the Forum, Malta Tourism Authority and MedCruise member Cartagena were amongst destinations who participated at a workshop session of one-to-one meetings with cruise line executives on the final afternoon.



Nigel Lingard visits the Cartagena table



Walter Littlejohn, MedCruise svp Albert Poggio and Fred Olsen's Nigel Lingard

2008/09 and geared mainly at the Spanish and UK markets, a 'significant development'.

Participating cruise executives spoke of mild climate, less congestion and cheaper air connections to hub ports as draws. On the downside, inclement weather, rough seas and the quietness of some smaller ports or possible closure of some attractions could be threats to future growth.

'The temperate climate in winter should be the central focus of the marketing message,' said George Stathopoulos, ceo

MedCruise Members

■ Alanya	■ Moroccan ports
■ Alicante	■ Naples
■ Almeria	■ Palamos
■ Balearic Islands	■ Palermo
■ Barcelona	■ Pescara
■ Bari	■ Piraeus
■ Batumi	■ Portoferraio
■ Cagliari	■ Portuguese ports
■ Cartagena	■ Ravenna
■ Castellon	■ Rijeka
■ Catania	■ Sete
■ Ceuta	■ Sevastopol
■ Civitavecchia	■ Sibenik
■ Constantza	■ Sinop
■ Cyprus ports	■ Sochi
■ Dubrovnik, Korcula	■ Split
■ Egyptian ports	■ Tarragona
■ French Riviera ports	■ Toulon, St Tropez
■ Gibraltar	■ Trieste
■ Koper	■ Tunis
■ La Spezia	■ Valencia
■ Lattakia	■ Valletta
■ Livorno	■ Venice
■ Malaga	■ Volos
■ Messina	■ Zadar
■ Monaco	

Contacts

MedCruise

José Campos
Secretary General
Portal de la Pau, 6
08039 Barcelona, Spain
Tel: +34 607 87 87 50
Fax: +34 93 306 88 17
secretariat@medcruise.com
presidency@medcruise.com



MedCruise News

Editor: Mary Bond
Editorial Assistant: Libby Isted
Production Editor: Fiona Hockey
Seatrade Communications Ltd
Tel: +44 1206 545121
Fax: +44 1206 545190
mary@seatrade-global.com

Seatrade

Published by Seatrade Communications Ltd