

MEDCRUISE NEWS

BRINGING THE MED TOGETHER



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President's view – on track for further growth

As 2011 fast approaches, a year in which MedCruise celebrates its 15th anniversary, association president, Giovanni Spadoni, talks about the targets he would personally like to see reached under his presidency which is now over half-way through.

'First of all I would like to increase further MedCruise's recognition in the industry, which had already reached very high levels before my election. We have to expand the number of member ports in the regions like the Eastern and Southern Med and the Black Sea where we still have good potential for growth. To do this we have to offer new services mainly to the small ports that through the Association will find the right channel to promote themselves but also instruments to grow from an operational point of view.

I think that the choice made by my predecessor, and strongly pursued by the present board too, to give relevance and representation to the four regions MedCruise ports are ideally divided into, under the strong umbrella of the Association, was a good choice and gives us an added value that probably other cruise ports associations do not have.

Through our projects such as "port benchmarking", our training programs and workshops we offer our members the chance to measure themselves and their services against other already successful ports and the cruise lines' needs.

The growing number of ports joining MedCruise creates more weight and more recognition for the Association, thus

continuing this worthy process.

Thanks to the efforts of our very professional Board and staff, present and past, we have created a new "culture" which is the true value of our Association, which we have to maintain and promote. This culture is based on understanding our clients' requirements, but also understanding our strength as ports working together in the common interest and benefit of our countries.

The challenge for the future Board will be to maintain and increase the levels of

services for members, reinforcing our present structure. But this is a strategy that will be in the hands of our members.'

We have created a new "culture" which is the true value of our Association.



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IN THIS ISSUE

Association News/People 1-3

PRESIDENT'S VIEW 1

A GROWING MEMBERSHIP 2

MEDCRUISE OUT AND ABOUT 2

2ND BLACK SEA CRUISE CONFERENCE IN ODESSA 3

Port facilities & Infrastructure 4-9

BARCELONA 4

CARTAGENA 4

CEUTA 4

MOTRIL-GRANADA 5

PALAMOS 5

MALAGA 5

SETE 6

FRENCH RIVIERA 6

TUNISIAN PORTS 6

MADEIRA PORTS 7

AZORES 7

CYPRUS PORTS 7

VENICE 8

RAVENNA 8

DUBROVNIK 8

BALEARICS 9

NEWS IN BRIEF 9

Destinations 10-14

MESSINA 10

LIVORNO 10

CAGLIARI 11

ZADAR 11

GIBRALTAR 12

ALMERIA 12

BATUMI 13

SOCHI 13

LISBON 14

ALANYA 14

Itineraries / deployment 15-16

OCEAN VILLAGE BIDS FAREWELL 15

PARKS & GARDENS THEME FOR SEA CLOUD 15

ROYAL CARIBBEAN STIMULATES BRITS LOVE 15

AFFAIR WITH SPAIN 15

LATEST CUNARD HEADS FOR THE MED 16

AIDABELLA - A RECORD BREAKER 16



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Izmir event



Giovanni Spadoni, President of MedCruise and Technical & Commercial Director of the Port of Livorno 2000 srl, was an honoured speaker at the recent '2nd International Congress on Mediterranean Trade and Port Cities: Past and Future', which took place in Izmir, Turkey from 14-15 October 2010.

Spadoni's presentation detailed recent industry trends and the activities of the MedCruise association as a catalyst for promoting growth, as well as including tips on developing a successful cruise port and building Eastern Med itineraries.

The congress was well attended by some 60 delegates from 10 different Mediterranean countries, including regional cruise and commercial ports, numerous chambers of commerce and shipping and local dignitaries as well as many other professionals active in the cruise sector. Representatives of Costa and MSC also presented to delegates. The congress was followed by a day of local shore excursions to promote the already-popular Izmir as a cruise ship port-of-call.



There's strength in numbers

2010 has been a record year for new members joining MedCruise. In June, at the 36th General Assembly, it was announced that membership had grown by four new ports: Burgas (Bulgaria); Lisbon (Portugal); Marseille (France) and North Sardinian ports of Olbia, Golfo Aranci and Porto Torres.

At the 37th GA, taking place in Cannes this month, another eight ports are expected to officially sign up: Turkish ports of Istanbul and Rize plus four Greek ports of Patras, Igoumenitsa, Kos and Heraklion. As well as Yalta in Ukraine and Portimao in Portugal. Associates membership has risen too, to 29, with five new additions: Cambiaso & Risso (Genoa); Idu Shipping & Services (Constantza); Londonskaya (Odessa); Mercantile Marine Shipping (Tunisia); Navigator Travel & Tourist Services (Volos) and Donomis Cruise Services (Volos).

A warm welcome to everyone and proof that the benefits of joining our ever growing family of cruise ports is being heard across the region. Amongst initiatives launched this year is a membership drive postcard campaign, sent to over 70 Mediterranean ports not yet members, asking them to contact us about joining.

More information about the five newest member ports from Turkey and Greece will appear in the next issue of MedCruise News, March 2011 which will also be distributed at Cruise Shipping Miami.



A membership drive postcard campaign initiated this year will be continued into 2011



MedCruise out and about

It has been a very hectic period, post-summer, for MedCruise which has had representatives attend a number of events to speak about the Association, and the good work that has been achieved to date.

In addition to MedCruise being a co-organiser of the 2nd Black Sea Cruise Conference (see Page 3), at which president Giovanni Spadoni gave a presentation, he also participated at events in Izmir (see left), a conference in Monopoli (one of the ports of Bari Levante Port Authority) and one in Opatija (near to Rijeka).

The Monopoli conference, entitled "Small Ports: pass key for local tourist districts. The UNESCO Sites route: one suggestion, one resource, one idea for new cruise", took place between October 8th-9th 2010. The conference focussed on the development of small ports, particularly in the Adriatic, and

an agreement of cooperation was established among small ports in the Adriatic /Aegean Sea to develop the existing network.

The Opatija Conference had the title "The First International Multidisciplinary Conference on Sea, Transport and Logistics - Clusters and Innovations" and organized by our member port Rijeka. It was held between 20th-22nd October 2010 and MedCruise secretary general José Campos and Giovanni Spadoni participated in the Workshop on "New Trends in Cruise Terminal Management and Governance: what lessons for the Mediterranean region?"

MedCruise svp Carla Salvadó participated in the summit "Optimising Port Development" that was held between 5th-6th October in Dubai. And Giovanni Spadoni was also invited to the Valencia Cruise Forum on 11th November.

2nd Black Sea Cruise Conference, Odessa

The Black Sea region has a number of obstacles to overcome if it is to raise its profile and draw in more cruise lines. This is the opinion of analyst Peter Wild who spoke at the 2nd Black Sea Cruise Conference, held in Odessa in September.

He pointed out that air draft restrictions on bridges in the Bosphorus make it impossible for post-Panamax cruise ships to pass in and out of the Black Sea.

'Post-Panamax vessels currently account for about 32% of the cruise fleet and this is going to increase to about half the fleet over the coming years, so this will prove an obstacle for the Black Sea region's cruise expansion plans,' commented Wild.

'There will always be vessels that can call at Black Sea ports, but they will be losing out on serious revenue from the large vessels,' he added.

MedCruise was a supporter of the event which has now been held twice in Odessa. MedCruise president Giovanni Spadoni



gave a presentation on the role of MedCruise in developing the Black Sea as a cruise destination.

Among cruise line participants was John Tercek, vp commercial at Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd who said the Black Sea region is appealing as the ports are located close to each other, enabling fuel-efficient itineraries and opportunities to spend more time in each destination.

More and longer berths, modern terminals, improved signage at attractions and better air connections were recommended by a number of conference speakers to improve the region's cruise infrastructure.

However, Spadoni urged ports to keep their rates competitive – not just passenger taxes, but also port services such as pilot charges. Odessa, the Black Sea's most popular port with 150 ocean and river

cruise calls expected this year, has reduced its port dues, as has Constantza.

Nikolay Pavlyuk, general manager of Odessa Sea Commercial Port presented a paper on passenger terminal development in Odessa.

Passenger Shipping Association chairman Bill Gibbons highlighted the potential to increase passenger sourcing from areas around the Black Sea such as Russia, Ukraine and Turkey.

Tura Turizm's Erkunt Oner also believes sourcing passengers from countries surrounding the Black Sea will help to grow regional cruise business. He cites an example of a ship based out of Istanbul offering a seven day itinerary half filled by international passengers and half from local markets: with partial turnarounds say from Turkish passengers, Russian passengers in Sochi and Ukrainian passengers in Odessa.

The organisers of this event will be looking to repeat it again in 2012.



Odessa's tunnel to the past

Attendees at the 2nd Black Sea Cruise 2010 had a chance to explore a section of the tunnels that run below the city which is offered as a shorex for cruise passengers calling at the port.

Known as the catacombs, the tunnels extend 1,400km around the city and date back to the beginning of the 19th century. Dug out to provide limestone to build the city with, the catacombs are spread out over three levels and are considered a dangerous place to visit.

They were used by smugglers to move contraband into and out of Odessa city-limits – taking advantage of the city's free-port status. However, it is their link to the Second World War that is the real draw as the tunnels were used by partisan fighters to resist German control of the territory. It is this history that is best preserved in the

'Partisan Glory Museum' that was set up in 1969.

Groups are taken in to a specially re-enforced section of the tunnels for a first-hand experience of the lives of the partisans that lived underground for a period of two years. The tour allows passengers to enter rooms such as the kitchen, sleeping quarters and communication section that have been extremely well preserved.



Barcelona: Europe's top cruise spot

Barcelona will finish the current year with 866 calls and 2.35m passengers, the third consecutive year that it has topped the two million passenger mark.

AIDAbu, MSC Magnifica, Eurodam, Saga Pearl II, le Boreal, Seabourn Sojourn, Costa Deliziosa, Disney Magic and Nieuw Amsterdam were among the roster of 13 new visitors which called in 2010.

Barcelona continues to upgrade its cruise facilities to make sure it maintains its top



© Joaquin Giró

Cartagena's expansion plans on track for next spring

Cartagena will record over 101,000 passengers by the end of 2010 with 74 calls. The newly extended cruise berth and terminal, just 200mtr from the city centre, is expected to be finished by spring 2011. The port will then offer 500mtr of cruise quay allowing two ships to call at the same time.

Alongside the berth is the cruise terminal will also being extended by around 1,500sq mtr.

Amongst first time callers this year were AIDAvita, Vision and Adventure of the Seas, Nieuw Amsterdam, Star Clipper, Queen Elizabeth and Victoria, Saga Pearl II

and Discovery.

The most popular tours are Cartagena itself and Murcia which includes a visit to the

Cathedral, casino as well as its lively squares and chance to sample its famous tapas.

Of great interest in Cartagena is the Concepcion castle with panoramic views of the city, the Roman Theatre and its Museum.

Sometimes this shorex can

be done by segway, adding an appealing and somewhat different feature to the tour.

The newly extended cruise berth and terminal is expected to be finished by spring 2011.

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spot as Europe's leading cruise port: This year Terminal C has been enlarged and improved with a new passenger bridge, comprising a fixed gangway, vertical communications buildings with escalators, lifts and stairs, and mobile gangways ready to serve the next generation of ships coming to the port next year: Norwegian Epic, Liberty of the Seas and Carnival Magic.

Winter cruising is increasing year on year. In fact, last month 121 ships visited Barcelona as cruise passengers were lured to the West Med thanks to the mild Mediterranean climate. Costa, MSC, NCL, Louis, AIDA, Celebrity, Princess. Oceania and Happy Cruises are all sending ships to Barcelona this winter season.

Extending the winter season and accommodating the new generation of ships in the port, keeping the high level of service quality, are the two biggest challenges facing Port de Barcelona.

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Ceuta: A taste of North Africa

Over in North Africa the Spanish port of Ceuta continues to attract 25 to 30 ships annually. So far 20 calls are expected at Spain Quay which can host vessels up to 250mtr long and which is located 100mtr for the city centre and its wide range of duty free shops.

The terminal has bus parking and shuttle service, plus taxi rank, public telephone, tourist information, harbour security, and accommodation for the national and civil guards.

The Mediterranean Maritime Park with its 56,000sq mtr of grounds is located in the heart of the city and offers gardens with a solarium containing deckchairs, sunbeds and shades plus a salt water lake with waterfalls. There is also a Castle in the



centre of the park with a casino, a restaurant and a chill out bar. The park includes children's recreational zones, and tapas bars. All these facilities provide a rainbow of possibilities for a perfect day under the sun and stars.

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Passenger growth expected to quadruple in 2011 in Motril

Albaicín



Motril-Granada port will see a qualitative and quantitative change in its cruise traffic in 2011 when passenger growth is expected to quadruple reaching almost 10,000 with new calls by six ships namely Fred Olsen Cruise Lines' Braemar and Boudicca, Princess Cruises Pacific Princess, Holland America Line's Prinsendam, Azamara Cruises' Azamara Journey and finally Residensea's The World will make a 3 day call.

The port is investing nearly €2m on a new passenger reception centre. The aim of the port is to provide easy and uncrowded access to Granada's star attraction the Alhambra (45 mins away) plus over 15 other excursions to discover landscapes, gastronomy, monuments and experiences for passengers visiting

Granada province.

Given its proximity to so many inviting places and the rich gastronomy of the area, the range of shorex options at a relatively short distance is immense. The landscape of the Alpujarras, the picturesque villages such as the Lanjarón, Órgiva, Pampaneira, Bubián or Trevelez are of great gastronomic tradition. Even closer by are coastal villages of Salobreña, Almuñécar – a notable number of cellars with modern wines that are being awarded internationally – one of the best caviars is produced at Rio Frio or just enjoy the wonderful beaches, many of which are still undeveloped.

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100,000th passenger for Palamos

The port of Palamos, linked to the government of Catalonia, will finish the 2010 cruise season with 32 calls and 28,000 passengers. Funchal and Thomson Dream have all called for the first time this year.

During a recent visit of Thomson Dream, one of the passengers onboard became the 100,000th passenger to arrive at Palamos and so the port community presented them with a prize for a free weekend break on the Costa Brava (pictured).



To assist in promoting Palamos and its surrounding hinterland to the cruise community, the port authority, the local public administrations and private companies have signed an agreement to collaborate together to foster cruise activity. Cooperation partners of the Port of Palamos includes, Palamos Council, Costa Brava Tourism Board and the Palamos Chamber of Commerce.

A famm trip was organised earlier this year to bring representatives from US based cruise lines, together with local shorex providers and port agents. They visited the Dali Museum in Figueres, the cathedral and Jewish Quarter in Girona, the monastery of Sant Pere de Rodes and the medieval town of Peralada.

Palamos is forecasting 40 calls and 45,000 cruise visitors in 2011.

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Malaga's base port success boosts numbers

Next spring Malaga will inaugurate the second phase of the Eastern Passenger terminal providing an additional two floor terminal building totalling 7,714sq mtr.

In addition, the Port of Malaga has a berthing area for small and medium sized cruise ships in Quay No. 2, close to the city and only a five minute walk away for the historical centre.

Malaga has been a huge success story



this year with significant growth having been recorded. In total, 680,000 passengers are expected on 325 ships in 2010. This traffic increase follows on top of a 38.2% growth in annual passenger numbers, to 488,000, for calendar 2009.

Malaga has been successful in marketing itself as a base port, capitalising on its southerly location, AVE high speed railway links to the Madrid region, and summer season non-stop flights from New York.

Looking ahead to 2011, Malaga's data shows figures for cruise ships, and mostly for passengers, will keep increasing, as in previous years.

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Sète's refurbished terminal officially opened



A delegation of the Sète Cruise Club visited the UK at end of September on a promotional visit to meet with cruise lines including P&O Cruises, Fred Olsen, Saga, Swan Hellenic and Thomson.

Port of Sète's Catherine Lafon (left) together with Stephanie Bleu (right), promotion manager of the Languedoc-Roussillon region tourist board informed execs about latest developments in the port's infrastructure and shorex opportunities in Sète and the surrounding areas.

Sète welcomed 15 cruise calls this year and is expecting that number to rise to 23 in 2011 said Lafon when Thomson Dream will visit 12 times. 'Thomson is returning to Sète after a lapse of five years or so and we are happy,' she added.

On October 1, 2010 Saga Pearl II was a visitor when Georges Freche, president of the regional council, officially opened the newly refurbished terminal which was finished at the



end of June. In addition to the interior makeover, the €200,000 investment also included resurfacing of the parking area in front of the building which can accommodate up to ten coaches at a time plus new fencing and the removal of the old customs and immigration buildings. There is also a shop inside selling products and souvenirs from the local area.

Sète is also known as the Little Venice of Languedoc with its many canals lined with colourful facades. Aside from Sète itself, the Languedoc-Roussillon region offers a wide range of tours including four UNESCO World heritage gems.

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New initiatives on the French Riviera



700,000 visitors will arrive in the French Riviera this year on 96 cruise ships at either Cannes, Antibes, Nice or Villefranche. The latter pairing will receive 56 ships including for the first time, Princess Cruises' Ocean Princess, Celebrity Cruises' Equinox and Azamara Cruises' Azamara Journey.

This June, the French Riviera Ports Authority introduced a new initiative involving environmental visits to the ships that call at their ports.

The first visit was to Royal Caribbean International's Independence of the Seas on June 24, when about 20 guests including representatives from local trade associations, local residents, members of the French Riviera Cruise Club, elected representatives, university researchers, chamber of commerce

staff and media went and saw how the cruise ship manages its environmental stewardship. They also visited below decks to see equipment and processes conducted to manage waste and water.

The plan is to make two visits to each of the French Riviera ports during a year.

Another initiative involves providing individual tourist information to passengers disembarking ships in Cannes, Nice or Villefranche. A French Riviera Cruise Club hostess, dressed in navy blue and white, will assist passengers providing information in French and English on excursions to suit all tastes and interest.

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1 million passengers targetted in Tunisia

Tunisia's main cruise port of La Goulette boasts a new tourist village built inside the port's perimeter. Covering an area of 6,500sq mtr, the Goulette Village Harbour resembles a medina with Tunisian architectural styling and comprises a central building with two wings alongside housing 100 shops selling local handicrafts, clothing, watches and jewellery. There are an a la carte fish restaurant, cafes and juice bar plus hammam, health and beauty shops.

Opened earlier this year, the village is managed by private company, Goulette Shipping Cruise (GSC), and serviced by two



new cruise berths offering a total length of 657mtr and up to 10mtr draft. The new docks in addition to the existing ones reach a total length of 1,700mtr.

The new quays has extended the port's capacity by over 50% making it possible to handle increasing cruise calls. Each berth has a new terminal for passport control and there is a bus parking area for 150 vehicles close by.

In 2009, 752,291 passengers called at La Goulette, a number forecast to reach 850,000 this year. Up to 1m passengers are targetted for 2012. www.goulettevillageharbor.com

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Madeira: A year of improvements

With its new passenger terminal opening in June, Funchal is expecting to finish the year with 310 calls and already has 309 booked for 2011, with more expected. Portos da Madeira is projecting that it will receive 500,000 passengers in 2011.

Some of its biggest challenges are to extend and expand the low season and attract turnarounds. Concerning the first issue, 184 calls are expected to call at Madeira this winter, an increase of 12% on last season.

2010 has been a year of improvement for the port, with the major highlight the opening of a new passenger terminal to support turnaround passengers as well as those on transit calls. The facility offers better security, comfort, quality and services to all users.

One of the most popular tours for passengers arriving in Funchal are the Monte Palace Tropical Gardens which occupy an area of 70,000sq mtr and houses a huge exotic plant collection from around the world together with swans and ducks that populate the central lake and peacocks and chickens that walk freely around the grounds. Azaleas and Orchids from the Himalayas, Heather from Scotland, Protea from South Africa) and a rare cycads collection, are just a few of thousands of species that you can find in the garden.

Monte Palace is located on the hillside, 600mtr above sea level and offers stunning views of the Bay of Funchal, the city and Atlantic Ocean.

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Azorean ports eye 130 calls in 2011

Since the inauguration of Ponta Delgada's new Gateways to the Sea cruise terminal in 2009 the number of cruise ships visiting the Azores has reached new heights. 'We are looking to receive 130 ships at all Azorean ports (including Horta and Praia da Vitoria) in 2011. This is a significant increase and in terms of passengers we are anticipating over 30% more,' says Carlos Adalberto, president of the administration council of Azores Ports.

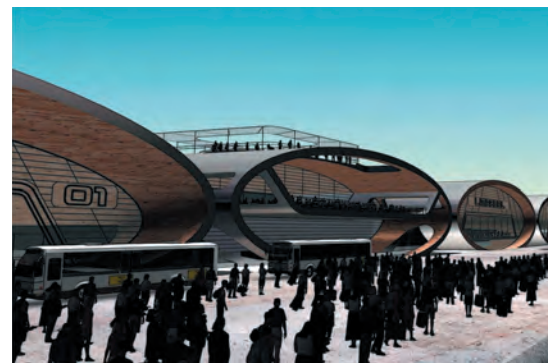
The current winter season is promising with 21 ships scheduled between November 2010 and March 2011 compared to 14 last season.

In addition to the new Gateways to the Sea terminal the Azores Port authorities are investing in a ferry and small cruise ship terminal in Horta which will be completed by the beginning of 2012. There are also plans to build a new terminal on Terceira Island.

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Cyprus pushes ahead with new terminal



Cyprus Port Authority presses ahead with its new 7,500sq mtr passenger terminal in Lemesos which will be fully compatible with criteria set by the Schengen Convention as well as safety and new security requirements set by the EU.

The project estimated at a cost of €14.5m approx is scheduled to be completed in late 2012.

Looking ahead to next year, 92 cruise vessels have booked to call at Lemesos although the CPA is expecting a similar number of ships and cruise passengers as in 2010 which is projected to finish on 194 international cruise ships with 227,500 passengers in transit and 3,800 on turnaround.

At Larnaca 48,125 international passengers visited the port in 2010 on 62 port calls.

The above figures only refer to ships that do not originate their journey from a Cypriot port. There are additionally a number of calls and cruisers that start and end their voyages in Cyprus which undertake itineraries to nearby destinations like Egypt, Syria, Israel and the Greek islands.

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Venice seeking more handling capacity

Construction of Phase Two of the new terminal at Isonzo is underway. When finished the new facility will comprise a 7,500sq mtr building plus 3,800sq mtr terrace and provide simultaneous berthing for two large cruise ships.

Work is due to start at the beginning of next year on the conversion of building 109/110, located along Tagliamento quay into a modern cruise terminal extending over 14,000sq mtr.

But Venice is not stopping there. With passenger numbers expected to grow again by 13% in 2011 the Port Authority and terminal operator Venezia Terminal Passeggeri are cooperating actively in finding more capacity to handle the ever growing size and number of ships wishing to call at the Adriatic base port.

A feasibility study for a quay and 10,000sq mtr terminal set on two levels for the latest generation of cruise ships is underway. The area chosen is on the immediate mainland staddling the municipalities of Venice and Mira between the Avesa and Dogaletto Canals. The cost of the construction is estimated at €10m and it is estimated that the project could be completed in 14 months of continuous work. Another project might involve a new quay for mega ships within the new Logistics Platform of Fusina.

In the meantime, building of the new MBT (Multipurpose Boarding Tower) serving Terminal 117 has begun and will be operational for the start of the next cruise season. This is an innovative solution developed by VTP Engineering, a division of VTP, to embark and disembark passengers using elevators to link the dock, terminal and vessel regardless of the height of the boarding ramp.

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Explosive increase expected at Ravenna's new facility

Azamara Quest was the first vessel to call at Ravenna's new Porto Corsini cruise terminal this August. Two berths are in operation and construction of a third and fourth berth, costing €13m and €8m respectively, are planned although a completion date is still to be announced.

Upon completion the €53m facility will have four berths two of which for ships up to 350mtr in length. RCCL, Bologna Airport and Venice Terminal Passeggeri, are among the members of the Ravenna Terminal Passeggeri operating consortium that has a concession on Ravenna's new terminal until 2019, and RCI's Voyager of the Seas is among 76 calls already booked to call the city next year.

These ships are expected to bring over 150,000 passengers.

'Thanks to a focused and intensive marketing activity by Ravenna Terminal Passeggeri, there has been an explosive increase in the 2011 cruise traffic calendar for which Ravenna Port Authority is strongly committed to take all the necessary steps in order to further accelerate the completion of the remaining works', noted port marketing manager Mariliana Moschona, who also advises the most popular tour continues to be the visit of Ravenna's eight UNESCO monuments in the historic city centre.

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Dubrovnik expands



Dubrovnik is likely to surpass the one million passenger milestone next year as 610 cruise ships are already booked to visit the Croatian port bringing 990,000 passengers.

This year seven new callers were amongst the 716 ships bringing 970,000 passengers: Holland America Line's Eurodam and Nieuw Amsterdam, MSC's MSC Magnifica, Celebrity's Equinox and Eclipse, P&O Cruises' Azura, Silversea's Silver Spirit and Ponant's Le Boreal.

Currently Dubrovnik Port Authority is reconstructing and rebuilding its port infrastructure. Phase One, involving renovation of an existing quay and a new 810mtr long berth was completed last year. Phase Two is in progress and includes a new cruise terminal, multipurpose trade centre, garage, city congress hall and range of leisure and entertainment facilities over the next few years.

A walk through the streets of the Old Town and a wander along the walls of the Old City are still the most popular tourist attractions for new and previous visitors to Dubrovnik, often referred to as the 'Pearl of the Adriatic'.

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Palma

Balearics bounce back

The first nine months of this year have seen cruise tourism in the Balearic Islands bounce back after a brief decline recorded in 2009. Last year

the ports of Palma (Mallorca), Mahón (Menorca), Eivissa (Ibiza) and La Savina (Formentera) recorded a total of 642 calls carrying some 1.2m passengers.

From January to September 2010 Palma recorded 407 calls carrying just over 1m passengers, corresponding to increases of 24% and respectively 30% over the same period of 2009. Mallorca's capital is looking to close 2010 with a total of 533 calls.

The Port of Eivissa likewise remains on growth track with the number of calls due to rise 15% this year compared to 2009. In contrast, Mahón saw a 14% decline in passenger numbers during the first nine months of the year.

The Autoridad Portuaria de Balears (APB) is investing heavily including a €36m extension of the western pier currently underway at Palma, ensuring additional capacity for handling very large ships.

2011 seems to bring further growth to Palma and Eivissa, with berth reservations for the latter port already up by almost 25% on this year. Mallorca strengthens its position as a year-round destination, with both AIDA and Costa retaining regular calls during the winter of 2011/12.

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News in brief

Turkish Black Sea port of **Sinop** had eight calls booked for 2010 including Nautica and Silver Wind where historic attractions are in abundance including an archeological museum, Sinop Castle, Ethnographical Museum and Alaadin Mosque are popular. Special tours for smaller groups include jeep safaris and a waterfall tour (19 within 8km vicinity).

Port of Genoa continues to invest in new and improved cruise facilities to cater for larger callers including €3.2m on new embark/disembark halls at Ponte Andrea Doria and a new 345mtr long quay at Ponte dei Mille costing €13m and ready by end 2011.

Port of Odessa can accept cruise ships up to 330mtr in length following the launching of reconstructed berth 16 in August this year. In 2009, with the aim of environmental safety and attractiveness, the port initiated the reconstruction of the berth paving and contemporary siding of the two-storey passenger terminal building in the same modern stylistic decision. The terminal is also wheel chair accessible.

The Black Sea port has finished the 2010 cruise season with 115,000 passengers and 72 cruise calls. Looking ahead to next year 120,000 passengers are projected to visit the Ukrainian port on 65 cruise ships booked so far but this will no doubt increase as more booking are confirmed.

With a sail area of 36,000ft and a 226ft mast, Star Clipper is a familiar ship in the **Port of Valletta**. The Star Clipper's vessel arrival on

October 19 was a special day since the sailing ship entered the Grand Harbour for the first time flying the Maltese flag.

Later in the month Seabourn Sojourn, the newest addition to Seabourn's 5-star fleet sailed into Malta for her maiden call.

The new vessel was welcomed into the harbour by a cannon salute as the ship docked at the Valletta Waterfront.

Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2011, released worldwide today, named the cruise ports of **Valencia**, in its Top 10 Cities to visit next year. In the first nine months of 2010 the Spanish port recorded a 29.1% increase to 194,170 passengers compared to the same period last year and 16.2% more calls, numbering 122.

From mid-December the city will be linked with Madrid by the AVE high speed train, offering a fast alternative to the highway or flying.

Mediterranean countries of Bulgaria, Italy and Syria were listed in the Top 10 Countries to visit.



Sinop



Genoa



Odessa



Star Clipper



AVE high speed train



Peloritani delights in the mountains around Messina

Messina which will finish 2010 with 216 calls and 392,000 passengers is expecting passenger numbers to rise by 9% next year. Most frequent new callers this year was Louis Cruises whose Coral and Louis Majesty visited 28 times in total, Costa ships called 18 times, Celebrity 15 and MSC 12.

The mountain chain called the Peloritani, that surrounds Messina, offers beautiful scenery and a ridge from which two seas may be seen, and culminates in the Rocca Salvatesta area at the mountain peak of Novara and continues into a small plain at the summit of Monte Scuderi and finally ends at the summit of Dinnamare, the nearest city.

There are many different tourist itineraries on the Peloritani. One of the most inexpensive and breathtaking excursions is a two hour bus trip that leaves from the city and begins in Masse.

Look out for arid mountains, green valleys, rock-filled streams surrounded by flowered prairies and cultivated fields. Then there is a view of two seas: the Ionian and the Tyrrhenian divided by the Peloritani mountain ridge.

Towards the south, past Dinnamare, if one takes a road not too far off the main road of Castanea, the snowy peaks of Etna can be seen. At the extreme northern point, there is a lighthouse that faces the strait of Messina, and directly at its side, there are two lakes, Faro and Ganzirri.

Returning towards the city, the great Aspromonte closes in on this magnificent scenery. The tour duration can be half day or full day, if combined with the visit of the city of Messina.

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Livorno: A new view of Tuscany

Cruise passengers arriving in the Port of Livorno now have a chance to see Tuscany from a different view, by taking a helicopter flight-seeing tour.

Operated by Rome-based Air-Dynamics, two new helicopters (seating seven) offer excursions over the Tuscan art cities (Pisa, Lucca, Firenze and Siena) or the Tuscan Archipelago from Massa-Cinquale and Grecciano heliport, 10 minutes from the port.

Porto of Livorno 2000 has established a commercial agreement with Air-Dynamic, which specialises in private helicopter and jet services, to promote the flight-seeing excursions to the cruise industry.

Livorno has just completed dredging the

access channel to 80mtr to the port's Northern Berths suitable for cruise ships up to 315mtr. Next step will be to cut part of the shoreside channel to a final width of 100mtr, completion due by the end of 2011.

A chance to see Tuscany by taking a helicopter flight-seeing tour.

From next summer ships up to 270mtr will be able to berth alongside Pier 75 (currently the maximum length is 200mtr). The nearby waterfront restoration continues.

Whilst Livorno is increasing the number of berths available for larger ships it is working closely with cruise line itinerary planners to manage any eventual clashes.

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Siena from the air



Secrets of the Sun in Sardinia's Cagliari



Passengers arriving in the Sardinian port of Cagliari have an opportunity to take a walking tour revealing the secrets of the City of Sun. This half day tour starts from the port with an official guide and heads to the Marina and then on to the Castello quarter with a visit to Piazza Cattedrale, Bastione S. Croce and Bastione St Remy, plus an optional visit to the archaeological excavations under the church of S. Eulalia if time permits.

Sardinia has a number of wetlands, consisting of lagoons and coastal marshes, which are habitats for a large number of wildlife and plant species. In particular the S. Gilla Lagoon and Molentragius Wetlands, both located near Cagliari city centre, are two of the most important stopover sites in Europe for migrating pink flamingos.

In 2002 some 3,000 chick flamingos were hatched in this area, which significantly boosted the population. A chance to see these fascinating birds and other wildlife is offered in a new tour to the natural park near Poetto beach which stretches for 8km outside the city.

Further afield is a trip to the old Roman Theatre in Nora which lies 30km from Cagliari. This site hosts the remains of the most ancient city in Sardinia, founded by

the Phoenicians who landed on the west coast of the island between the 9th and 7th centuries BC.

Cagliari had 79 ships bringing 158,000 passengers in 2010 and the same number of ships are expected next year. Silversea's Silver Spirit and Silver Wind were first time callers in 2010 as was Celebrity Eclipse.

'A public tender for the management of its new cruise terminal has been issued', informs Valeria Mangiarotti.

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3,000 years of history in Zadar

Passengers arriving in Zadar can take a variety of half day sightseeing tours and quickly discover 3,000 years of rich history.

This beautiful city has a municipal square measuring 45 by 90mtr dating from the Roman era, built from the 1st Century BC to the 3rd Century AD. An inscription with the name of Augustus' proconsul for Illyricum, Tamfil Vaale, carved on the well of the Forum, testifies that the complex construction was started as early as the second decade of the 1st Century BC.

In the course of history the complex was reduced to rubble and buildings erected in earlier times were destroyed. In its place Kampa was built, a medieval square with a

Renaissance cistern.

Popular with visitors today are a tour inside the church of Saint Donat and the Archbishop's Palace. An ecclesiastical art exhibition called 'The Gold and Silver of Zadar' permanently housed in the monastery of the Church of St Mary, displays relics, chalices, sculptures, paintings and embroideries with golden threads, produced by the nuns and depicting the region's history.

The Croatian port received 84 cruise ships and around 15,000 passengers in 2010. Further growth is expected for next year when 100 ships and 20,000 passengers are projected to call.

Currently under

construction is a new passenger and ferry terminal to be located in Gazenica, two miles for the city centre. Completion is scheduled for 2013 and will provide new berthing capacity for international ferries and cruise ships.

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Gibraltar's Rock and Panoramic tours a big draw

The most popular excursions for passengers calling in Gibraltar remain the Rock Tour and Panoramic Tour although amongst new tours for 2011 is a Spanish Cooking Master Class in La Linea.

Royal Caribbean International's Adventure of the Seas will be a first time caller on November 1, 2011 and will be one of nine newcomers to Gibraltar next year. The Cruise Terminal will be upgraded and expanded to allow for the increase in mega ships. Improvements will also be made to the condition of the Western Arm used for the docking of cruise ships.

New for 2011 is a Spanish Cooking Master Class in La Linea.

The current refurbishment being undertaken at Europa Point will much improve the passenger experience as they may visit this point as part of their tour. Part of the refurbishment will see new restaurants, gardens and viewing galleries across the bay to North Africa.

Gibraltar has seen a progressive increase in the number of cruise passengers arriving. In 2010 over 319,000 passengers visited and next year will rise again with 183 ships and 325,582 passengers booked so far.

'Gibraltar has avoided the worst of the

current economic crisis,' says Albert Poggio, United Kingdom representative of the Government of Gibraltar in London. 'Cruise calls are predicted to be slightly down for this year, but even so we are expecting a rise in passenger numbers, primarily due to the larger ships.'

Gibraltar for instance has seen calls from vessels like the Independence of the Seas which carries over 5,000 passengers and crew at a time.

Gibraltar has welcomed inaugural calls from Azura, Saga Pearl II, Celebrity Eclipse, Seabourn Sojourn, Queen Elizabeth and MSC Splendida in 2010.

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New tours on Almeria's agenda

Almeria, located in the easternmost province of Andalucia, is a convenient port from which to visit Granada and Alhambra which is two and a quarter hours away by bus.

However local tour companies and ground handlers are working hard to increase the number of excursion and tour options on offer to cruise passengers including golf, four by four vehicle adventures, birdwatching, go-karting and flamenco shows.

Nearby is Mini-Hollywood, an area located in the Tabernas desert, the only

desert in mainland Europe. Its unique and dramatic landscapes provided the backdrops for legendary films such as A Fistful of Dollars, For a Few Dollars More, The Good, the Bad and the Ugly, Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade, amongst others.

Tours of Almeria itself are proving popular as are trips to the Cabo de Gata National Park, Mojacar and the Alpujarra Mountains.

Almeria is expecting to finish 2010 with 53 calls and 56,681 passengers and looking ahead bookings for 2011 are expected to bring a 6% growth in passenger numbers.

This summer Ocean Village (in her final season in the Med before heading off to Australia) and Eurodam made maiden calls.

Nieuw Amsterdam and Crystal Serenity, also newcomers, are scheduled to arrive before the end of the year.

Winter calls are steadily growing with Louis Cruises' Louis Majesty booked to call once next month and twice in February and Fred Olsen's Black Watch in March.



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Batumi's renaissance



Batumi in Georgia, located on the eastern shores of the Black Sea, finished 2010 with 10 calls bringing 3,127 passengers. Holland America Line's Prinsendam kick started Batumi's season with a visit in April and the same ship was the last call of the season when it returned to dock 840 passengers in mid-October.

This year Batumi Sea Port has worked closely with the tourism department of Adjara to attract more cruise business to the area in a season which currently starts in April and finishes at the end of October.

The port has a passenger terminal with capacity for up to 180,000 passengers a year offering two berths of 220mtr in length and 194mtr. The water depth alongside is 8.3mtr and 11.6mtr respectively and the building is located in the city centre.

Passengers visiting Batumi can stroll down the longest boulevard in Europe. Construction started in 1881 and it has been renovated and increased over the years. Together the old and new boulevard stretch 12 kilometres. The place is famous for its statues and dancing fountains and houses a number of entertainment places including restaurants from various cuisines from places like Mexico, China, Italy, Turkey, Germany and Greece.

Batumi Sea Port has worked closely with the tourism department of Adjara

The city of Batumi has been under reconstruction since 2007-08. New buildings and international brand hotels such as Sheraton, Marriott, Hilton and Radisson are being added. Older facades and popular squares in the city have been renovated.

The city also boasts the second largest Botanical Garden in the world located in Makhinjauri. New pathways have been constructed so visitors can stroll and view the multitude of plants sourced from around the world. The local sea and mountain climate makes it possible for a variety of plants to survive in this garden.

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Sochi: A glimpse at Stalin's Dacha

The most popular tour taken in Sochi is Joseph Stalin's Dacha. Stalin played an important role in the development of Sochi as a spa resort. He oversaw the building of some spa houses and sanatoria located in the region. At Zelenaya Roscha meaning Green Grove is the site of his former summer residence. Situated within an old park, the dacha was built in the 1930s and the interior has been preserved as it was in Stalin's time. The wooden floor is still intact and the fireplace and in his own cinema hall there is a wax figure of Stalin sitting at a desk whilst he is smoking a pipe (right).

Sochi seaport had 27 calls in 2010 bringing around 13,200 passengers and expectations are

for a 15-20% increase next year. Seven new ships called at the port which can accept ships up to 200mtr in length alongside and the larger ones at anchor.

However a new cruise port is planned which will be able to accommodate ships up to 330mtr in length and ferries up to 220mtr.

The port will also have a 250-room four star Radisson Grand Marina Sochi hotel and new retail facility closeby. A new yacht marina for 200 boats will also be created in the basin of the existing port. It will be the first of its kind in Russia and will provide berthing and services for yachts from 10 to 50mtr in length.

Sochi's landmark waterfront revival has

been sparked by the city's hosting of the 2014 Winter Olympic Games.

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Stalin's Dacha

Lisbon: Behind the scenes at FC Benfica



New for passengers arriving in Lisbon next year is an unforgettable treat for football lovers - a tour of Estadio da Luz, home of FC Benfica and one of the most famous stadiums in Europe.

Also known as the Stadium of Light, it is a symbol linked to the history of Portuguese football. The tour starts in the gallery which charts 100 years of the football club's history and displays the trophies that the team has won over the past century.

There is a visit to the presidential box, the dressing rooms, press room and players tunnel and coaching area so passengers can follow in the footsteps of great players like Figo, Ronaldo, Beckham and Rooney, to mention just a few, who played here during the Euro Championship in 2004.

One of the personalities that sits in the president's box during Benfica's home

matches is Eusebio, the greatest Portuguese players of all time.

The football club's emblem is an eagle and the stadium has its own, called Victoria, who circles the stadium at every home match. During the tour there are opportunities to be photographed with the eagle.

The visit ends with a walk around the pitch and chance to explore the souvenir shop. On the journey back to the ship passengers can enjoy a panoramic drive through Lisbon city centre.

Visit ends with a walk around the pitch and look in shop.

With 308 calls and around 450,000 passengers in 2010 Lisbon maintains its position as Portugal's leading cruise port. 19 new ships arrived at the port's facilities this year where a new terminal is planned to open at end 2013. Together with the existing Santa Apolonia terminal the two buildings will be served by more than 1,500mtr of berthing quay fully operational by end of next year.

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Alanya's heritage trail

Alanya is one of the most charming holiday resorts on the Turkish Riviera, boasting a magnificent historical heritage. The city is visited by 2 million holidaymakers during its nine month season.

Alanya's Castle, Dockyard, Red Tower and Alarahan Caravanserai were added to the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List in 2009.

All of these attractions can be visited by passengers arriving at Alanya Cruise port. A new marina became fully operational in June providing berths for 287 yachts plus a shopping centre, swimming pool and leisure facilities.

Major improvements are being made to the city with a focus on improving

accessibility for disabled visitors.

Oceania was the new visitor in 2010 and 2011 will see ships calling from NCL, Regent Seven Seas, Swan Hellenic and Windstar Cruises.

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Ocean Village bids farewell to the Med



The cruise for people who don't do cruises' brand has said good bye to the Mediterranean, a summer home for the past seven years.

Ocean Village embarked in October from Crete on a 23-night 'Fond Farewell' journey to Singapore, where the ship will be converted into Pacific Pearl for P&O Cruises Australia.

Formed as a casual, fun sister brand to P&O Cruises in the UK, Ocean Village was aimed at a more youthful market. It enticed younger couples, singles and families with children to try a sea-going holiday.

The first Ocean Village ship, the former Arcadia, set sail in 2003. In 2007, Ocean Village Two (ex AIDAblu) was added. But, ultimately, the brand wasn't seen to promise high growth in the Carnival portfolio.

Two years ago Carnival UK announced plans to phase out Ocean Village and transfer the ships to P&O Australia. Ocean Village Two was transferred last year.

At the time, Carnival UK ceo David Dingle credited Ocean Village with doing much to change the face of British cruising, adding: 'All our UK brands have benefited from this.'

Parks and gardens theme for Sea Cloud

Sea Cloud Cruises is promoting seven voyages in 2011 themed around European park and garden visits. In early and late summer, Sea Cloud II (below) will journey to the Mediterranean: departing Lisbon to Barcelona (early May 2011) and Rome to Malta (end September). Lovers of parks and gardens can enjoy a wide variety of landscaped paradises: from orange and almond tree plantations and wild flowers in bloom in the Portuguese highlands to the olive groves, vineyards and blood orange plantations of Italy. Guests can also book the pre-cruise programme in Rome from September 25-27 2011, where they have the opportunity to visit the secret gardens of the famed Villa Borghese.



Royal Caribbean stimulates Brits love affair with Spain



Royal Caribbean International is scheduled for bumper Spanish deployment in 2011 with five ships set to sail from Barcelona, Malaga and Palma de Mallorca during the year.

This summer RCI carried 30,000 cruisers on itineraries departing from Malaga, 40% of who came from the UK and Ireland, 'making Spain the third most popular cruise departure port for UK and Ireland travellers,' said Dominic Paul, managing director for Royal in the UK and Ireland.

In 2011, the total Malaga figure is forecast to hit 77,000 guests, he commented during a press conference held onboard Malaga-based ship Adventure of the Seas and hosted by the Provincial de Turismo of the Costa del Sol.

For UK and Ireland guests, booking trends indicate that a majority also add a land stay in the popular Costa del Sol region, he remarked.

'Barcelona has long been a popular homeport for Royal Caribbean International and we have enjoyed significant growth in the UK for take up of cruises offered from Malaga since 2009. To continue to stimulate the British holidaymaker's love affair with Spain, new for summer 2011 we have introduced cruises from Palma de Mallorca for the first time. These cruises are also delivering pre- and post-cruise land stays – this is fantastic for the Spanish hoteliers and the Spanish tourist industry in general,' said Paul.

MEDCRUISE NEWS

BRINGING THE MED TOGETHER

Latest Cunarder heads for the Med



British pomp and ceremony was the order of the day as Queen Elizabeth was named in Southampton in October. Guests took their seats in a specially-built grandstand on the quayside to listen to a classical music extravaganza from the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and Chorus.

Meanwhile, live footage of Her Majesty the Queen on a guided tour of her namesake Cunarder was beamed onto two large screens. During the tour with Capt. Chris Wells and Cunard president and md Peter Shanks came an amusing moment when the Queen pushed the ship's horn whilst surrounded by the officers on the bridge.

The massed bands of the Coldstream

Guards and Scots Guards marched and played along the quayside in front of the ship as the Queen took her seat in the royal box with Carnival Corp. & plc chairman and ceo Micky Arison.

One of the first places Queen Elizabeth headed for was the Mediterranean, including a big welcome in Gibraltar last month.



AIDAbella sets Guinness world record

AIDAbella pulled a water skier for six minutes and 25 seconds, at a speed of 14 knots, setting a Guinness world record, according to AIDA Cruises.

Capt. Josef Husmann was in command when Jan Schwiderek, a reporter for the television show 'Galileo,' was towed off the Spanish coast in the Bay of Alicante as passengers lined the rails. A Guinness official was on hand to certify the record.



December 2010 | Issue 30

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