

MEDCRUISE NEWS

CELEBRATING 15 YEARS 1996-2011

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Ioannis Diamantidis, Minister of Maritime Affairs, Islands and Fisheries speaking with Piraeus Port President Yiorgos Anomeritis and Deputy Minister of Tourism George Nikitiades in the audience.

Strong support for MedCruise General Assembly in Piraeus

The Greek port Piraeus hosted the 38th MedCruise General Assembly in June, providing a picturesque platform for member ports and cruise lines to pave the way forward for cruising in the region. The meeting, which saw the number of Greek members increase to 10 following the inclusion of Thessaloniki and Chania (Souda), received significant support from the region and enabled a number of resolutions to be passed.

'I'm very happy about the result we got from the assembly. We met two important ministers - the minister of transport and the minister of tourism, and they gave our general assembly the recognition that it deserves,' said MedCruise President Giovanni Spadoni, adding that the Port of Piraeus was a particularly appropriate location for the assembly in light of Greece's long tradition of civilisation and shipping. 'Piraeus port has recently restarted being active in MedCruise and we found them very mindful of the problems and the issues of the cruise industry. Our members showed a high level of participation and were very interactive during the assembly and the workshops.'

One of the key results of the assembly was the member approval of a unified berth booking scheme for MedCruise member ports with unified booking timelines - a topic that had seen heated discussion when it was previously discussed at the Seatrade Med event

in Cannes in December. Although the scheme is non-compulsory, members are encouraged to implement such a system as it will eliminate issues such as double bookings and lead to the creation of regional time tables for ports and it is designed to help manage congestion at marquee ports. It also paved the way for discussions about possible cancellation fees with the cruise lines.

Another important topic was that of port benchmarking. 'In the workshop, the benchmarking project scheme was presented to the cruise lines to get their advice for its final definition,' Spadoni said.

The MedCruise President also spoke of the association's support for member ports in Tunisia and Egypt. 'We have proposed the creation of a special committee to help these ports improve their security in order to meet the cruise line's requirements and resume receiving the previous levels of calls,' he stated.



MedCruise president, Giovanni Spadoni

IN THIS ISSUE

Association News/People 1-4

STRONG SUPPORT FOR MEDCRUISE GA IN PIRAEUS	1
38TH MEDCRUISE GENERAL ASSEMBLY	2-3
TUNISIA'S DEPUTY TOURISM MINISTER URGES CRUISE LINES TO BRING SHIPS BACK	4

Port facilities & Infrastructure 5-6

ISTANBUL	5
ANTALYA	5
VENICE	5
PALERMO	6
MESSINA	6
FRENCH RIVIERA	6
THE AZORES	6

Itineraries / deployment 7-8

COSTA MEDITERRANEA CALLS ALANYA	7
BARCELONA'S DOUBLE TAKE	7
MEIN SCHIFF 1 BASED IN VALLETTA	7
MALAGA OPENS NEW TERMINAL	7
SALVADÓ ADDRESSES SEATRADE IN SAO PAULO	8
ADRIATIC PORTS LAUNCH BOOK IN MIAMI	8



MEDCRUISE

THE ASSOCIATION
OF MEDITERRANEAN
CRUISE PORTS

38th MedCruise General Assembly

Lines seek good infrastructure and prompt planning

MedCruise member ports attending the general assembly held at the Metropolitan Hotel in Piraeus benefitted from a series of presentations by, and one on one interaction with, representatives from Holland America Line, Royal Caribbean Lines, Norwegian Cruise Lines, Louis Hellenic Cruises, Pullmantur and V Ships.

A hot topic on the agenda was berth reservation system, which many lines are eager to see implemented provided there is clarification of the criteria for the reservation. Ports may choose to assign berths according to factors such as vessel size, time of application for reservation, relationship with the cruise line, number of calls per vessel, etc. RCCL's manager, port operations, Mediterranean and Middle East, Francisco Reddel, believes that

passenger numbers should play a major part in berth allocation as the company's passengers often exceed those of other cruise lines.

The line representatives also outlined what their companies were looking for in both turnaround and destination ports. These include picturesque port facilities with 'airport'-like passenger terminals, good levels of infrastructure and stable port fees. 'We must be given enough notice from ports about fee increases,' said Pullmantur's vp bunker, port and shorex Eduardo Lopez-Puertas. 'Last minute changes are really not acceptable. 'If we publish a catalogue with set prices then the ports need to commit to those rates as well.'

Another particular sea of interest for MedCruise members was year round port calls in the Med – an area of cruising that the lines

felt presented both opportunities and obstacles. Simon Douwes, HAL's director, deployment and itinerary planning, pointed out that the Rotterdam will be based in Europe year round specifically to target the winter cruise market. However, he warned, 'we have to be convinced that would make as much money in Europe as if we had left the ship in Florida and for this we have to factor in the cost of fuel and occupancy levels.'

Other representatives such as Vassilios Gazikas, senior gm for marine operations at Louis Hellenic Cruises warned of the need to have activities and shopping facilities at the ports called at during the winter season. 'In Greece most of the islands are deserted, we don't want to bring passengers to deserted places,' he said, stating that winter cruises will call at main cities, limiting itinerary planning.



L-R: VShips' Matta, NCL's Myrtilidis, Pullmantur's Lopez-Puertas, RCCL's Reddel, Louis Cruises' Gazikas, HAL's Douwes, PPA advisor Korres and MedCruise's Spadoni



L-R: RCCL's Francisco Reddel chats to InterCruise's Mark Robinson



VShips' Georgio Matta with representatives from Ukraine's Londonskaya Travel Agency and the Port of Odessa



L-R: MedCruise's Campos, PPA's Hatzakos, MedCruise's Spadoni and Carla Salvado from Port of Barcelona



Louis Hellenic Cruises senior gm for Marine Operations, Vassilios Gazikas



Holland America Line's, Simon Douwes



MedCruise president, Giovanni Spadoni

sembly - June 1-4th, 2011



MedCruise excursion to Hydra Town Hall



Hydra



PPA hosts lavish evening meal



Minister presentation



PPA's Hatzakos (L) hands token of appreciation to Mayor of Poros



MedCruise members given tour of Acropolis Museum

Picturesque Piraeus positioned for growth

MedCruise founding member, the port of Piraeus, played host to the bi-annual General Assembly in the first week of June – using the opportunity to showcase its forthcoming investments. ‘We are facing a continued increase of visitors in our ports and want to improve the port infrastructure – but must address problems of other authorities in the port,’ said Stavros Hatzakos, administration director at Port of Piraeus.

The port has received approval from the Greek government for construction of two more passenger terminals and six additional berths. The port authority is likely to offer cruise lines the opportunity to develop the berths packaged with concessions to encourage the investment.

Port representatives arranged for special tours of the existing facilities for journalists, cruise line executives and other MedCruise members during the General Assembly. There are also plans for a five star hotel above one of the new passenger terminals, which has seen considerable interest at the bidding stage. It is expected to be used both by passengers on cruise vessel turnarounds at the port as well as by the wider shipping and tourist community.

The attendees were also treated to a special tour of the Acropolis Museum, located in Athens that was followed by a lavish dinner at a restaurant with a view of the Parthenon. This meal came on the heels of a wonderful dinner attended by the Greek ministers for transport (including

shipping) and tourism held at the Greek Yacht club, with a sunset view of the Saronic Gulf.

The port also arranged a day of excursions to the nearby islands of Hydra and Poros, where MedCruise members were greeted by the respective mayors and given a chance to talk about the island's cruise aspirations. The mayor of Hydra also organised a special authentic Greek lunch for the MedCruise visitors at Sunset Restaurant – voted second in ABC News' 2009 poll of the top 10 restaurants with a view. In addition to opening doors for future collaboration, the excursions also boosted the islands' economies, with most visitors returning to Piraeus laden with shopping bags.

Tunisia's deputy tourism minister urges cruise lines that have cancelled calls to bring ships back



L-R: Neil Palomba (MSC Cruises), Maha Ben Slimane (Goulette Shipping Cruise), Giovanni Spadoni (MedCruise president), John Tercek (Royal Caribbean), Sami Saadallah (Mercantile Marine) Aymen Ben Tili (Goulette Shipping Cruise).

Holland America Lines' Eurodam and AIDA Cruises' AIDAbella tied alongside La Goulette Village Harbour on April 30, marking a return of cruise ships to Tunisia after a three month drought.

To mark their arrival in Tunis, Goulette Shipping Cruise organised a special welcome for the passengers and crew of both Carnival Corp ships which stayed alongside all day. Local musician and dancers performed whilst passengers were handed Tunisian flags and roses. Camels were on hand to give free rides.



Shipping agent, Medacruise's managing director Laurent Sicard, (right) taking a camel ride at the La Goulette Village.

Post Tunisia's revolution in January, and following the outbreak of unrest in neighbouring Libya, a number of cruise lines, including MSC Cruises, Costa, Disney and Pullmantur announced a withdrawal of all cruise calls to Tunisian ports this year. Since then some have said they continue to review their decision and may return later in the year.

Earlier in April, Royal Caribbean's John Tercek, MSC Cruises' Neil Palomba, TUI Cruises' Kai Merkel, MedCruise president Giovanni Spadoni plus local shipping agents, ground handlers and Seatrade Insider editor Mary Bond, spent a couple of days as guests of the Ministry of Tourism and Office de la Marine Marchande et des Ports visiting La Goulette port and cruise

terminal and popular places of interest such as Carthage, the Moorish village of Sidi Bou Said, the city centre and Medina and the National Bardo Museum.

Tunisia's Deputy Minister of Tourism, Slim Chaker, urged cruise lines that have cancelled calls this year to rethink their decision so passengers get an opportunity to experience the new post-revolution Tunisia.

'On January 14 we obtained our freedom and now we are working hard to build up a democracy. On July 24 we will have our first free elections for the population to reflect their own choice of leadership,' Chaker said at a press conference in the Tunis Sheraton Hotel.

Last year, Tunisia welcomed 892,000 cruise passengers bringing around \$90m to the economy, 'which helped maintain our historical sites and provided thousands of jobs,' Chaker underlined. This year the port is facing a sharp decline in traffic with the March announcements by two of its biggest customers, MSC Cruises and Costa Crociere, that they were dropping calls.

MSC Cruises pulled four ships representing around 30 calls from La Goulette but its coo, Palomba, told the audience: 'Today was my first time in Tunis and it was good to see it first hand. We found exactly what we expected: that the place is safe and Tunis getting is back to normal.' He added, 'Our decision to cancel



Neil Palomba at the National Bardo Museum, awash with an amazing collection of mosaics

calls this summer is not driven by us alone but by the market's perception. If the customer does not feel safe, we have to listen to what our customers tell us.'

Tercek concurred: 'We are in the business of taking guests where they want to go. Just now there is some uncertainty out there. They look at a map and see Tunisia flanking the border of Libya and many are unsure about their safety.' He went on, 'I will report back to my company that we have come here today and walked on the streets and been to Carthage and seen for ourselves life is getting back to normal and everything is peaceful.'

Spadoni referred to Tunisia as the Mediterranean's fastest growing destination in the last decade and declared, 'MedCruise is standing by and supporting Tunisian ports



L-R: Lotfi El Ajmi, Office de la Marine Marchande et des Ports, Tunisia, Hamdi Fehri director, Port of La Goulette and Giovanni Spadoni

which have been a member of the association since its launch 15 years ago.' He added, 'Today I found the security at the port and in the city impeccable, as well as the hospitality of the people, and MedCruise hopes the political situation becomes better and the cruise sector can assist you with continued growth.'

TUI Cruises' Merkel, responsible for port operations, said: 'I have not seen anything here today that will change our decision to bring Mein Schiff 2 to La Goulette in September/October as planned.' He was impressed with La Goulette Village, the first attraction of its kind in the Med, managed by Goulette Shipping Cruise.

Located inside the port's perimeter and next to the 650mtr long new cruise berth, it is built like a Medina in traditional Tunisian architecture and gathers more than 100 shops selling handicrafts and clothing, with restaurants, cafes and a hammam. Musicians and performers mingle with visitors who can also take a camel ride.

Tercek raved about it, too: 'It is your best kept secret,' he proclaimed. 'The way it has been thought through, providing an authentic cultural and shopping experience close to the ship, I am sure passengers will feel very comfortable and enjoy the entertainment also.'



Port of Antalya awarded

Port Akdeniz - The Port of Antalya run by Global Ports Holding received 'The Most Improved Terminal Facilities' award, owing to its significant progress in port operations and management within a short period of time.

The Turkish port was presented the Award by Dream World Cruise Destinations Magazine, during this year's Cruise Shipping Miami.

Other ports vying for this award included Dubai, Malaga, Seattle, Port Everglades, Stockholm and Tianjin in China.

Global Ports Holding, Turkey's largest port operator started to operate Port Akdeniz - The Port of Antalya in 2006 and took full control of the port in July 2010. Since its takeover, GPH has invested in the construction of new facilities, development of new technologies, transportation services, security, communication and other services offered to passengers.

MedCruise contact Figen Semerciyan:
figens@globalports.com.tr



Istanbul's new mega-port

Ground-breaking is due to start on the giant new cruise facility in Istanbul. Istanbul Seaport will comprise four berths for mega-ships plus two quays for smaller luxury vessels. Spread over a 650,000sq mtr area, the cruise facility will provide a 13,600sq mtr terminal and parking for more than 100 buses and taxis.

It will be part of a mixed-used development housing a congress centre, hotels, retail and entertainment, office space, houses and a marina for 800 standard yachts and 200 mega-yachts.

The new facility is located 10km from Istanbul Ataturk Airport and 8km from the historic sights at Sultanahmet.

Istanbul is a key homeport for lines offering butterfly itineraries into the Black Sea and Aegean, said Tura Turizm owner Erkunt Oner, a backer of the project.

The new facility should come on stream by 2013.

Istanbul is the host of the 2nd Seatrade Winter Cruising Forum being held Dec 5-7, 2011 at the Çiragan Palace Kempinski. Supported by MedCruise, the event will include a special workshop Turkey: Cruise Tourism Crossroads Between Europe & Asia.

MedCruise contact Burhan Kulunk:
tdi@tdi.gov.tr

Venice's new lounge for disembarking passengers

A new lounge will be available from July 2 at Venice Cruise Terminal for passengers waiting for transfers to the airport. Located on the first floor of Terminal 103, the lounge will open from 8am to 5pm during the peak days of July, August, September and October.

The aptly named Comfort Lounge will be fitted with a bar serving food and beverages, air conditioning, comfortable seats, shatzu massaging armchairs, screens broadcasting news, tourist information, and information on flight departures, a reading room with international papers, free internet points and a printer for web check-in, a free wi-fi area, hostesses offering general assistance and information.

A special room for kids will be fitted with a colourful playground suitable from toddlers to pre-teens, with games, table and seats, blackboards and pencils. The admittance ticket is €6 including a free soft drink. Accompanied children under the age of 12 will have free access.

'With this initiative, we

would like to contribute to meeting the passengers' requirements after disembarking and in particular we want to make sure that kids always have a good time even after the end of their holiday, while waiting to back home,' said Roberto Perocchio, managing director of Venezia Terminal Passeggeri.

The service will be managed by VTP Events, a sister company of Venezia Terminal Passeggeri.

In early May a magician conjured up the key elements for Carnival Magic's naming in Venice, materializing Carnival president and ceo Gerry Cahill on the stage in a helicopter and the bottle of champagne for godmother Lindsey Wilkerson to break. The young woman survived childhood cancer thanks to treatment at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Carnival Cruise Lines has pledged \$3m over three years to St. Jude.

MedCruise contact Francesco Drigo:
f.drigo@vtp.it



Sicilian ports up the ante

Sicily's capital Palermo anticipates a record 264 calls this year, a 43.5% leap on the 184 calls handled in 2010, with Disney Cruise Line and Royal Caribbean returning to the port, the latter with 27 calls this year.

Long-time client Costa Crociere will also have a greater presence, passing from 44 calls last year to 66 this time, with MSC Cruises bringing Splendida to the Sicilian capital and making 37 calls. Aegean Odyssey, meanwhile, which runs cruises that circumnavigate the island, will call eight times.

Palermo is now investing in a substantial upgrade of its cruise facilities, part of a sweeping makeover of the waterfront designed to reconnect the port with its city.

The €28.5m project, led by architect Italo Rota, includes the refurbishment of the Cala, Palermo's old port, at a cost of €8.5m, a task that is now nearing completion following the environmental clean-up of the site.



Meanwhile Sicilian port of Messina (below) is banking on investment in its cruise facilities to boost calls and passenger volumes.

Port sources said the completion last year of a major reconfiguration of its berths, featuring the creation of 455mtr of straight berthline that now allows it to handle two 300mtr ships simultaneously, had already provided a fillip for the port.

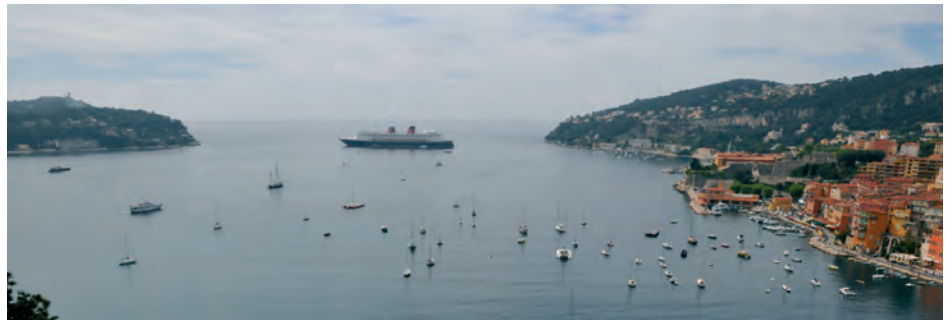
Now it is contemplating options for further growth including a permanent terminal. Costa and MSC already do turnaround business and RCCL is due to start from 2012 with Navigator of the Seas.

Last year Messina handled 217 calls and 374,441 passengers. This year should be better still, with 226 calls expected for 479,000 passengers, and there are hopes of topping 500,000 passengers by 2012.

MedCruise contact Daniela Mezzatesta:
promotion@portpalermo.it
Cristiana Laura: segretaria@porto.messina.it



French Riviera's new phone app



French Riviera Ports expect to top 660,000 passengers this year in a season stretching from February to December.

More than 490 calls in total are anticipated at the region's five ports: Nice, Villefranche sur Mer, Cannes, Antibes and Golfe Juan.

Each passenger spends €93 to €150 per day on shore, according to the French Riviera Cruise Club.

Among the calls this year, Sovereign will visit Villefranche, Azamara Journey and L'Austral will call at Nice and Star Flyer will visit Cannes.

New, the French Riviera Cruise Guide is now be available as a smartphone

application. Tailor-made tours, a comprehensive guide to attractions, restaurants and shopping and offers and events from the French Riviera Cruise Club members are part of the app.

The GPS trails fully off line, with no roaming charges.

The app is available for devices including iPhone, iPod Touch and Android and can be downloaded free before departure in the country of origin or on arrival, in Wi-Fi zones.

MedCruise contact Florence Lacroix:
florence.lacroix@cote-azur.cci.fr

The Azores' mid-May bonanza

Ponta Delgada on Sao Miguel island, The Azores' main cruise destination, welcomed over 13,000 cruise passengers and crew in a mid-May weekend as Norwegian Epic, Crown Princess and Celebrity Constellation called at the Atlantic archipelago Saturday May 14. The cruise arrivals equalled a fifth of the city's inhabitants.

To make the occasion the local tourist authorities, Ponta Delgada port, city and chamber of commerce organised a firework display, tourist information and welcome counters throughout the city centre, traditional folk and live brass marching bands and local arts and crafts fairs, inviting visitors to savour Azorean hospitality.

The outlook for 2012 is also promising with 115 ships and around 90,000 passengers due to

visit the islands, says Carlos Adalberto, chair leader Port of Azores Authority.

In May, 30 ships bringing around 28,000 passengers will call at Ponta Delgada's dedicated cruise terminal which opened in 2008, many of them en route from the Caribbean to summer sailing arenas in Northern Europe and the Med. In total, around 56,000 passengers will call in the first half of the year.

In addition to Sao Miguel, two other islands Terceira (Pria da Victoria port) and Faial (Horta port) handle cruise ships. This month, National Geographic Explorer and The World visited the latter.

MedCruise contact Carlos Adalberto Bernardo Silva: adalberto.silva@apsm.pt



Costa Mediterranea calls Alanya

Alanya Cruise Port welcomed Costa Mediterranea May 19, making it the biggest ship to visit the southern Turkish port. An official ceremony welcomed her arrival, and traditional plaque exchanges were conducted between Pier Luigi Foschi, chairman & ceo of Costa, the ship's officers and officials from Alanya and Italy.

The 1,976-passenger ship arrived on an 11 day Mediterranean cruise. She will call at Alanya six times in 2011. Her maiden call follows first-time visits of Artania, Seabourn Pride, Seven Seas Voyager, Island Escape, Boudicca and Astor.

Thomson Celebration, Minerva and Insignia all made maiden visits in March, April or May.

New Eastern Mediterranean winter cruise itineraries are creating a boom for Alanya. Between November 2011 and March 2012, 34 cruise calls are already scheduled, compared to four last winter. A total of 38 cruise calls are scheduled for Alanya between March and December this year.

The increasing popularity of the MedCruise member as a transit port is further demonstrated by the 43 cruise calls already scheduled for 2012.



Mein Schiff 1 based in Valletta

Valletta welcomed Mein Schiff 1 on its first homeporting operation at the beginning of May. Valletta Cruise Port is the ship's Mediterranean port of departure for the 2011 season from May to November. The excellent co-operation at the pier between TUI Cruises, Valletta Cruise Port and SMS International Shore Operations ensured a smooth turnaround operation.

In the evening, guests onboard were treated to an Inguardia re-enactment, showing events happening during the Knights of St John period, courtesy of the Malta Tourism Authority. A fifteen-piece village band

cheered the ship and its guests with a number of lively compositions. As Mein Schiff 1 was leaving the Valletta Cruise Port quays, the vessel was hailed with a full gun salute by uniformed members of Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna, a voluntary organisation active in the field of heritage preservation.

On its butterfly cruise schedule, Mein Schiff will be calling both the West and East Mediterranean with a variety of ports on its itineraries including Piraeus and Mykonos in Greece, Kusadasi (Turkey), Catania and Civitavecchia in Italy, as well as Monaco and Ajaccio.



Barcelona's double take



Norwegian Epic, the largest capacity cruise ship sailing in the Med this summer, became the first vessel to undertake embarkation and disembarkation operations simultaneously in two terminals at Port of Barcelona in May.

The 325mtr long NCL ship arrived at the Catalan port at 5am where the turnaround procedure began alongside Terminal A and Terminal B (both run by Creuers del Port de Barcelona), at the Adossat Quay.

Barcelona is Norwegian Epic's homeport for the summer offering week long cruises round trip through to October.

Cruise activity at Barcelona will reach a peak in August when eight ships carrying more than 31,000 passengers will call on one day (August 20), setting a record at the Port.

Malaga opens new terminal

Royal Caribbean International's Adventure of the Seas turnaround on May 14 marked the official opening of the port's new Terminal A.

To celebrate the official opening Cruceiros Malaga (owned by Creuers del Port de Barcelona and the Port Authority of Malaga), operators of Terminal B and now also Terminal A, presented the captain of Adventure of the Seas with a commemorative plaque.

Cruceiros Malaga invested €14.7m on Terminal A covering 7,714sq mtr, divided on two floors.

Cruise traffic at the port rose from 292,567 in 2007 to 659,123 in 2010. The Port of Malaga expects to welcome 700,000 passengers in 2011, of which 30-35% will be homeporting.

850,000 passengers are anticipated in 2012, with homeporting traffic expected to account for 35-40%.



MEDCRUISE NEWS

CELEBRATING 15 YEARS 1996-2011

Salvado addresses Seatrade South America in Sao Paulo



MedCruise's marketing and cruise director for the Port of Barcelona, Carla Salvado, shared her expertise with port and government officials from the Southern Hemisphere at the Seatrade South America Cruise Convention in São Paulo, Brazil. She addressed the importance for a homeport to invest in branding the destination by working with local tourism officials and to invest in infrastructure to meet industry growth. Salvado also addressed the need for ports to coordinate with all stakeholders, including city, tourism and airport officials, in order to provide quality service. At a time when cruise lines are challenged by high operating costs in South America, particularly Brazil, Salvado told Seatrade delegates: 'The Port of Barcelona doesn't live on the cruise business but we are proud of helping the economy of our city and region. The mission of the port is not to become rich but to enrich the region,' she said.

Adriatic ports launch book in Miami

The Adriatic MedCruise member ports of Dubrovnik, Koper, Ravenna, Rijeka, Split, Trieste, Venice and Zadar and a few other Adriatic ports launched the 2nd edition of their handbook at the MedCruise stand at this year's Cruise Shipping Miami.

'Adriatic Sea, A Sea of Thousand Faces' presents an invitation to discover the best ports and destinations on the Adriatic coast, through traditional and short-range cruise

options, accompanied by technical details about the ports, tourist information and interesting, original ideas for excursions.

Craig Milan, svp land operations, Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd and president, Royal Celebrity Tours (pictured left) with Giuseppe Fabbro said, 'with the price of fuel and bunkers rocketing the ability to create itineraries with a range of interesting ports within a short distance, like in the Adriatic, is very compelling.'



The next MedCruise General Assembly will be held in Sete, France on October 12-15, 2011

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MEDCRUISE

World Trade Center,
Edifici Est, 3a Planta
08039 Barcelona, Spain
Tel: +34 93 306 88 00 ext 7358
Fax: +34 93 306 88 17
secretariat@medcruise.com
José Campos, Secretary General

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