

MedCruise News

50th MedCruise GA in Gibraltar to host more than 120 cruise professionals



The 50th MedCruise General Assembly will take place 14-17 June 2017 in Gibraltar. During the meeting, MedCruise member representatives together with other esteemed guests will discuss the latest developments of the cruise sector, as well as the implications and prospects of cruising in the Med and its adjoining seas.

In line with the MedCruise tradition, all regular and associate members will have a first class opportunity to discuss the developments in the

region, while they will also devote time in B2B meetings and interactive workshops with cruise line executives.

Cruise lines to attend the GA in Gibraltar are Azamara Club Cruises, Carnival, Celebrity Cruises, Celestyal Cruises, Disney Cruise Line, MSC Cruises, P&O Cruises, Royal Caribbean International, Saga, TUI Cruises and Viking Ocean Cruises.

March 2017

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MedCruise presents its 2017 Statistics report at #SCG2017

In 2016, MedCruise membership welcomed 27.4 million cruise passenger movements and 13,467 cruise calls. "Cruise activities in MedCruise Ports: Statistics 2016" report makes available detailed information of this traffic per port and per region.

This flagship MedCruise publication details the actual picture of cruise activities in the Med and its adjoining seas over the past year and reveals the trends, enabling an understanding of the present challenges. It also facilitates the adjustment of MedCruise ports and their associates to contemporary market structures and challenges.

The report contains an analysis per port size, information about seasonality, major variations comparing to previous years and market concentration. The last section of the report includes a 'new' feature that enriches the publication: a statistical analysis of ferry traffic in MedCruise ports, offering valuable information to those interested in the evolution of passenger ports, but also to those interested in planning, developing, managing and administering cruise ports.

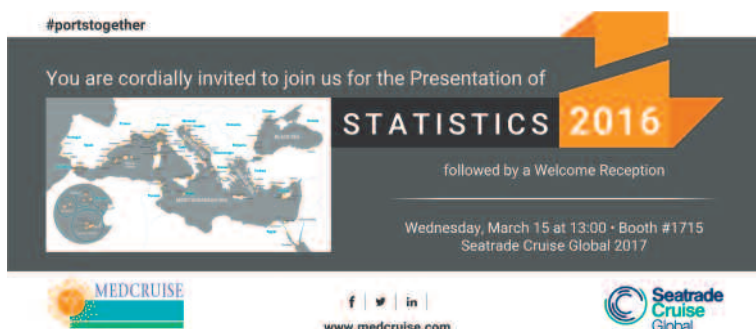
Join us for the presentation of "Cruise activities in MedCruise Ports: Statistics 2016", on Wednesday, March 15th at 13:00, Booth #1715, Seatrade Cruise Global 2017.

Meet MedCruise Ports at Seatrade Cruise Global 2017 (booth #1715)

Seatrade Cruise Global, the industry's global event which brings together every facet of the business including cruise lines, suppliers, travel agents and partners is being held again this year in Ft Lauderdale on 13-16 March at Fort Lauderdale Broward County Convention Center.

MedCruise participates at this major event promoting its member ports and their partners in the Mediterranean and its adjoining seas and attracting, thus, the most relevant stakeholders of the cruise industry.

Visit the MedCruise booth #1715 and be part of #PortsTogether



Commitment to sustainable growth

The sustainable development of the Blue Economy in the Western Mediterranean, was the theme of the Stakeholders Conference on 2 February 2017, in Barcelona.

MedCruise was actively represented by Mrs Valeria Mangiarotti, assigned member for environmental issues, Port of Cagliari.

Maritime and land-based activities, along with the progressively more urbanised coastline, are at the origin of a wide spectrum of pressures affecting marine and coastal ecosystems. These range from high resource consumption (water, energy, food products, raw materials, coastal space) to air and water pollution releases and waste generation, but also climate change effects on biodiversity and marine resources.

The panel discussed the opportunities offered by Sustainable Consumption and

Production (SCP) in the Western Mediterranean region, existing barriers and ways of overcoming them, the promotion of more effective SCP tools and projects, and stakeholders cooperation to mainstream SCP into Blue Economy sectors and act to prevent marine pollution.

Mrs Mangiarotti addressed among others the theme of waste reception facilities in the Med ports, emphasising the work that is done as regards the effective handling, notification, delivery, inspections and fee regimes, especially at the smaller in passenger movements and cruise calls ports in the Med.



European Tourism Day: welcoming EU funding



In front of an audience including MedCruise, and a total of more than 400 stakeholders, the European Commission celebrated European Tourism Day in Brussels.

MedCruise participated at the full-day conference discussing ways to enhancing synergies of its membership with tourism, cultural and creative industries, as well as identifying innovative solutions as the driver for jobs and growth.

Opening the conference, Karmenu Vella, Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, announced the Commission will continue supporting maritime and coastal tourism by making available €1.5m to fund new ideas, foster dialogue, and promote Europe as a maritime destination, in line with its 2014 'European Strategy for more Growth and Jobs in Coastal and Maritime Tourism'.

A 'Guide on Funding for Coastal and Maritime Tourism', developed in 2016, gives helpful information of available EU funding.

Thanos Pallis, MedCruise Secretary General, said the announcement opens possibilities for helping sustainable cruise tourism in the Med and beyond.

SEAnAIRgies: ports & airports growing together

Represented by their Association, cruise ports in the Mediterranean and the adjoining seas were among the keynote guests at the 4th Airport Chief Executives' Symposium that took place in Athens Greece.

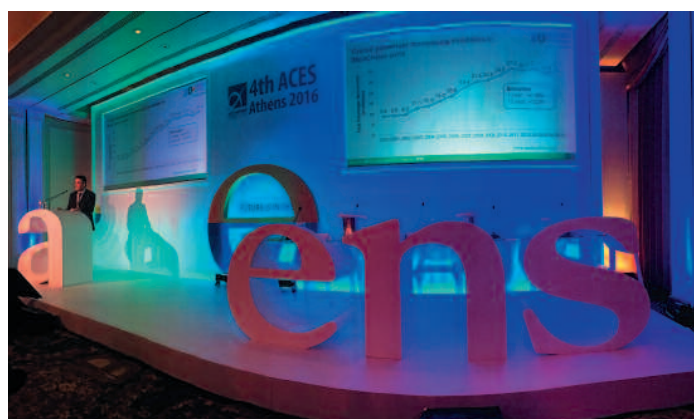
Organised by the Athens International Airport this year's edition of the platform for the exchange of ideas among high-level airport executives was devoted to the search for synergies – or SEAnAIRgies – between airports and cruise ports and their impact on the destinations they serve.

MedCruise Secretary General Thanos Pallis, delivered a keynote speech presenting those challenges and opportunities that cruise ports in the Med and airports can address together. He also introduced the findings of the MedCruise fact-finding report "Ports Together" that was published earlier this year, examples of existing initiatives aiming to smooth operations and increase the contribution to local

communities.

MedCruise Honorary President Stavros Hatzakos, (General Manager, Piraeus Port Authority S.A.) was also on stage, sharing the platform with the CEOs of the airports of Athens, Hamburg, Aeropuertos Españoles, Fraport Regional Airports S.A., as well as Mrs Angela Gittens, Director General, Airports Council International, World. "For MedCruise ports and associate members, cooperation is part of their culture. We work closely with the association of cruise lines, CLIA, and we are already engaged in talks

with major airlines. Collaboration with airports is the natural next step. We would like to congratulate the initiative of Airport executives to search for SEAnAIRgies together.



MedCruise Diary

Adriatic Sea Forum, Budva
27-28 April, 2017

ITB China, Shanghai
10-12 May 2017

4th Posidonia Sea Tourism Forum, Athens, 23-24 May, 2017

50th MedCruise General Assembly, Gibraltar, 14-17 June, 2017

Seatrade Europe 2017, Hamburg
6-8 September, 2017

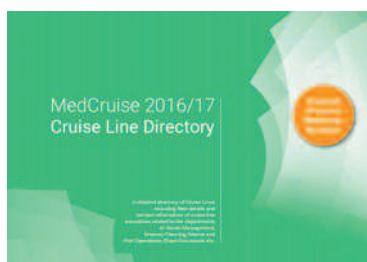
Italian Cruise Day 2017, Palermo
October 2017

51st MedCruise General Assembly, Toulon
October/November, 2017

MedCruise Cruise Line Directory

The updated MedCruise Cruise Line Directory 2016/17 is now available to the MedCruise membership.

All the members of the Association are offered exclusive access to MedCruise Cruise Line Directory, which forms a detailed directory of all major cruise line companies including fleet details, as well as contact information of cruise line executives related to the departments of Senior Management, Itinerary Planning, Marine and Port Operations, Shore Excursions etc.



Expanding MedCruise China Strategy

Since 2015, MedCruise is working on an extensive China Marketing Plan to benefit MedCruise members. This focuses on the fact that the region itself represents a high degree of attraction, combining different elements such as history, nature, culture and gastronomy, all much appreciated by Chinese tourists.

As part of this plan, MedCruise has created a Chinese website (www.medcruise.cn) aiming to emerge the Mediterranean as the mostly preferred cruise destination among Chinese cruise tourists, while the active presence of MedCruise members on WeChat (Chinese social media) forms also a crucial part of this plan.

Speaking during the International Cruise Summit 2016 in Madrid, MedCruise President Kristijan Pavic highlighted the vital role of cruise ports - as well as that of MedCruise - in advancing the Med and its adjoining seas as a unique cruise destination, increasing thus market penetration.

"Since July 2015 MedCruise has worked to create a strong brand positioning in the Asian

market. This forms part of a pioneering MedCruise project that commenced in 2014 and promotes the attractiveness of MedCruise destinations to the Far East, in a strategy aiming to transform Asia into a key passenger source market for cruises in the Med" MedCruise President noted.

In May 2017, MedCruise will join ITB China event in Shanghai, promoting its member port destinations to the Far East, especially targeting the Chinese source market.



MedCruise Associates

Starting in January 2017, MedCruise Associate members enjoy enriched membership benefits.

- Inclusion in all key directories and promotional material
- Circulation of news and company profile to more than 2.000 cruise industry professionals
- Promotion via the MedCruise website & social media
- Representation at major Cruise events (+ free booking of meeting space and distribution of company's promotional material within the MedCruise booth)
- Scheduled Business-to-Business meetings with Cruise Line Executives (twice a year)
- Complimentary copies of the extended MedCruise Cruise Line Directory
- Free access to all MedCruise studies



- Professional Development Courses (registration cost entirely covered by MedCruise)
- Reaching new Source Markets (e.g. the Asian cruise market)
- Links with other Associations and Institutions
- Numerous networking opportunities

Cruise Excellence: Dubrovnik

At the tenth edition of the Mediterranean Cruise Excellence Awards 2017, hosted in the MedCruise member port of Cartagena on February 16th, the Port Authority of Dubrovnik won the award in the category of "The Best Mediterranean Cruise Port / Destination in 2016".

The recognition was presented during the award winning gala ceremony organised by CruisesNews and was received by Dario Barbaric, B.Sc., Acting General Manager of the Port Authority of Dubrovnik.

Port of Dubrovnik maintains a leading role in MedCruise, with its President, Kristijan Pavic, also being the President of the Association.



Ancona



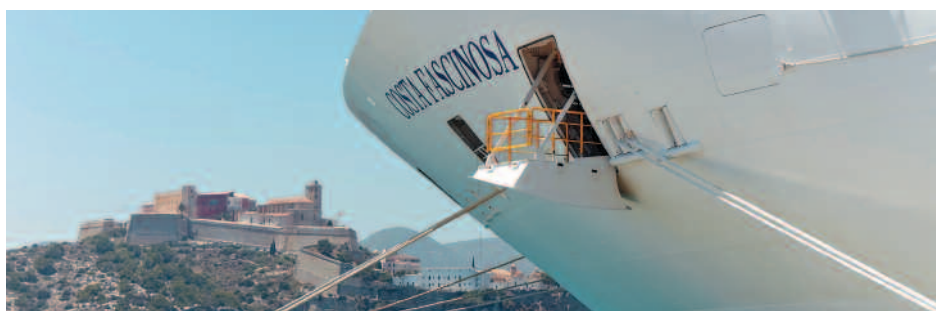
As well as a tour of the town of Ancona itself, the most popular tour from the port is to Conero Riviera. The Conero Riviera is a coastline stretching along the Northern Adriatic coast, south of Ancona. Colourful villages such as Il Poggio, Portonovo, Numana and Sirola appear between Mount Conero, featuring stunning beaches, rural, inland landscapes and vineyards. The whole area was declared a regional nature park in 1987 and majestic Mount Conero, which rises directly from the sea with a limestone peak reaching 1,877ft, is the guardian of the rich flora and fauna that surrounds it. The tour may include a visit to Loreto and the Basilica of the Holy House, the place where the Virgin Mary is said to have lived, arriving from Nazareth.

There are 34 calls expected to the port in 2017, the same as for 2016, bringing 55,000 passengers. Port capacity has improved significantly in the last five years and after the modernisation works on the quay, the port was able to accommodate MSC Sinfonia last year, at 275mtr in length carrying 2,579 passengers.

Ancona port is planning a new cruise terminal for the latest generation of cruise ships, outside the historical port but close to the town centre. The town and the region offer a number of attractions where the distribution of passengers flows easily.

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Balearic Islands



The five ports managed by the Port Authority of the Balearic Islands: Palma, Mahon, Ibiza, Alcudia and La Savina are well equipped to play host to the world's largest cruise ships yet strive for continuous improvements in facilities and services offered to cruise lines and passengers. The Port of Palma recently extended its quays for handling mega-ships and has started works on a new terminal.

Fine dining, shopping, culture, leisure, history, beaches; the very best of the Mediterranean, like the islanders' unique way of life is in plentiful supply in Ibiza. All this can be experienced on long calls lasting nearly 24 hours.

On the opposite side of the islands, towards the northeast are two excellent cruise ports sharing an enviable climate: Alcudia and

Mahon. The former is the latest port to welcome cruise ships and has huge potential as a port and destination for highly demanding very exclusive visitors. The Port of Mahon, one of the oldest enclaves in what was known as the Mare Nostrum has a lot to offer visitors in search of unique, perfect places and lasting memories.

A Palma city tour (the Cathedral, Almudaina Palace, Arab Baths, Bellver Castle and Joan Miro Foundation) remains the most popular for calling cruise guests whilst diving and sailing shorexps are top of the active category, families like the aquatic parks and for nature lovers, trekking in areas such as Cami de Cavalls in Minorca, is a big draw.

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Azores



Fire Lake & Furnas Valley is one of the best seller shorex available when calling at Ponta Delgada. An opportunity to visit the dormant volcanos, one of them with calderas, gardens and hot springs, amongst other interesting attractions. Furnas Valley is the most exotic of the scenarios on the island, with geiser and thermal pools.

The Twin Lakes at Sete Cidades is another best seller. Passengers have the opportunity to visit the west side of the island and the Massif of Sete Cidades, where volcanic craters give rise to numerous lakes such as Empadadas, Santiago Lake and the iconic Blue and Green waters of Sete Cidades Lake.

The biggest cruise ship expected this year is Norwegian Getaway. She will be calling twice into Ponta Delgada port on her east and westbound crossings. 150 cruise calls are expected for 2017 (12 of these maiden callers) and 144,000 passengers, this will be a new record for the archipelago.

Port of Ponta Delgada can accommodate any cruise ship and the main challenge at this moment is handling 3 or 4 calls at the same time. For the other 2 main ports, Praia da Vitória can accommodate big ships and another medium size ship at the same time and it has been catalogued by P&O Cruises as a must visit port for the future. This season Ventura is expected to set new records on the island. Finally, Horta is a smaller port but with a new cruise terminal and excellent facilities for medium sized ships, like Oceania's Marina.

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Sete Cidades Lake

Brindisi



40 ships are expected to visit Brindisi this year with MSC Musica scheduled to call on a weekly basis leading to a significant rise in passenger numbers of around 106,000.

In addition, Costa Luminosa carrying 3,780 cruise guests is the largest ship in terms of passenger capacity to visit the port this year, and a maiden caller along with Cunard's Queen Victoria, Crystal Cruises' Crystal Serenity and Ponant's Le Lyrica.

From the crystalline blue waters of the Adriatic to the ancient green olive groves

dotting the landscape, Brindisi offers a unique experience filled with emotions and colours. Popular destinations between 30-60 minute's drive from the port include the city of Arberobello whose centre has been recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage of Humanity site thanks to its 'Trulli' houses. Another must-visit is Ostuni, a stunning city famous for the dazzling effect of its whitewashed houses and the reason why it is called 'The White City.'

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Burgas

The fourth largest city in Bulgaria, Burgas is expecting to welcome two cruise ships this year: one is Costa neoRiveira and the other is Golden Iris owned by Mano Cruises, which is a new partner of Port of Burgas.

The Port can handle the biggest ships passing through the Bosphorus. The modern Maritime Station has two berths with 330mtr length and a depth alongside of 10mtr.

The 3,000sq mtr terminal can accommodate 200,000 passengers and is only 15 minute's walk to the city centre.

The port can accommodate two ships at the same time since the Magazia 1 former

warehouse was converted into a modern building last year.

The surrounding area provides space for buses, cars, taxis and pedestrian walkways. A free shuttle is provided from the port to the downtown and back.

The city has an international airport and the port is striving to become a turnaround for the Black Sea when cruising returns in earnest to the Black Sea area.

The nearby ancient towns of Nessebar and Sozopol are proven as popular tours for visiting cruise passengers.

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Barcelona

Twelve ships are destined to cruise into Barcelona for the first time in 2017, including the largest cruise ship sailing in the Mediterranean this summer, MSC Meraviglia with almost 5,000 passengers.

The total number of calls scheduled this year is 826 and over 2,750,000 cruise visitors are expected to visit the city and its surrounding area.

Close to Barcelona, some great cavas and wines are produced locally to the north and south of the city and it's easy to find wine tasting



activities in the nearby Catalan countryside.

The city boasts some of the most colourful and sumptuous art nouveau buildings in the world. At the foot of Tibidabo, you'll find Gaudi's best-kept secret: Torre Bellesguard. In the late afternoon, the tiny streets in the Gothic Quarter filled with bars and cafes come alive.

Fun is guaranteed at Barcelona's fairs and theme parks and kids will love the zoo and its 7,000 plus animals. At CosmoCaixa you'll discover dinosaurs and have fun doing experiments like a real scientist. If you have a sweet tooth the best place to get lost in Barcelona is the Museu de la Xocolata (Chocolate Museum).

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Cagliari



Spiaggia Poetto

Viking Cruises is increasing the number of calls in Cagliari from two last year to seven in 2017. Norwegian Spirit is also increasing its calls this year and Costa Diadema accommodating 4,250 passengers will bring the largest number of passengers on a single ship to the port/city.

In total, 163 ships bringing 426,206 passengers are expected to port of Cagliari. The port is close to the city centre and offers a dedicated cruise quay with two berths at Rinascente.

Buses are offered for independents from Rinascente to Roma Street where maps of the city are available. Elmas airport is less than seven kilometres away.

Popular with visitors is Poetto, less than 6.2 kilometres from the city centre. It has a lively environment and offers opportunities to cycle or walk around the famous Sella del Diavolo offering an extraordinary view of the surrounding coastline.

Castello, located 100mtr above sea level was first discovered by the Pisani in the 13th century. They fortified the area and turned it into their main centre. The most interesting places to visit here are the Bastione's terraces, Cathedral and Torri Pisane.

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Castellon



Castellon is a perfect port for smaller to medium-sized ships with access to the city centre close to the berth and several popular shore excursions in the surrounding countryside offering an opportunity to discover a great cultural legacy along with customs and traditions.

Saga Pearl II will be calling this year and passengers will no doubt be drawn to Peniscola, a town by the sea with a beach and the castle seat of Pope Benedict XIII of Avignon.

The beautiful cobbled streets with white houses and blue windows overlooking the Mediterranean, has an additional draw as

several of the scenes from Game of Thrones were recently filmed there.

Another popular attraction is St Joseph's Caves, the longest subterranean river in Europe, located in Vall d'Uxo. Most visitors choose to view the inner caves and paintings from the Paleolithic era on a boat trip for up to 15 people.

Since January it is also possible to go cave kayaking. This new activity combines both exploration and viewing with physical exertion in an area dating back 16,000 years.

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Cartagena



One of the biggest challenges for ports is to accommodate three large cruise ships at the same time and for this reason Cartagena is extending its berth by 700mtr.

On the land side, and in order to handle the great number of passengers wanting to go on shore excursions from the different ships, the terminal area has been enlarged and the access improved, both for buses and passengers, alike.

In anticipation of more cruise visitors, the region has also expanded the number of tour guides with 25 new heads added to the roster.

In 2017 Cartagena is expecting 230,000 passengers and 155 calls, of which 11 ships are new visitors.

Located in the southeastern coasts of Spain, Cartagena offers a vast cultural heritage due to its 3,000 years of history. Among the rich tourist offer that the city holds, the Roman theatre and its museum are the number one tourist attraction.

Other attractions are Spain's national Museum of Underwater Archaeology (ARQUA), an avant-garde building with a vast collection of pieces found at the bottom of the sea; Conception Castle with a tower that houses an interpretation centre of the city's history and the Punic Rampart, dating back to the 3rd Century BC.

2017 is an important year for Caravaca de la Cruz, a small town located in the northwest region of Murcia because it celebrates the perpetual Jubilee Year. It was declared a Holy City in 1998, making it the fifth holy city in the world. Caravaca was originally a Muslim settlement, but later was conquered by Christians. The baroque castle has a luxurious facade made from red marble and is surrounded by 14 towers to safeguard the shrine of the Santisima Vera Cruz.

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Basilica Vera Cruz

Ceuta



Several modifications at Ceuta's city centre cruise berth have seen the introduction of a new security system, new safe traffic flow system, signposting and landscaping to enable improved embarking and disembarking for passengers. €2.2m investment has been spent on the new facilities.

Around 15 ships and 20,000 passengers visit Ceuta annually a perfect location and ideal base to explore Morocco and the UNESCO-Listed World Heritage Site of the medina of Tetouan. It's large Jewish quarter was called Little Jerusalem with souks neatly laid out and each trade occupying a precise area. Tarafin Street, which is lined

with jewellery shops, leads to Hassan II Square and the Royal Palace, a fine example of Hispano-Mauresque architecture.

Also popular is a trip to the highest point in the city, with the first stop at San Antonio situated on Mount Hacho and providing panoramic views of the Straits of Gibraltar and the south coasts of the Spanish mainland as well as the city of Ceuta. Another view point, Isabel II, provides a view of the north coast of Morocco as well as the city below.

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Constantza

For any cruise visitor arriving in Constantza it's a matter of deciding where to go first; to the incomparable Danube Delta on a boat tour to see the newest land in the making of the European continent

Danube Delta



or a visit to Bucharest, the capital of Romania with its old and new architecture, museums and parks, Houses of Parliament and Village Museum.

For families, there is the Aqualand, Planetarium and Dolphinarium which can take a whole day to enjoy. Restaurants with Romanian traditional cuisine, offering an unforgettable selection of wines from famous local vineyards, are found along the coast from Mamaia 'the Pearl of the Romanian Riviera' in the North and it the ship stays longer in port, a beachside walk in the moonlight, to Vama Veche 'the Summer Paradise' in the South for those who enjoy music and fun.

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Corfu

392 cruise ships bringing 640,000 passengers is the prospect for Corfu this year. After completing a new cruise berth which is now fully operational the Greek island port is capable of hosting numerous ships at the same time.

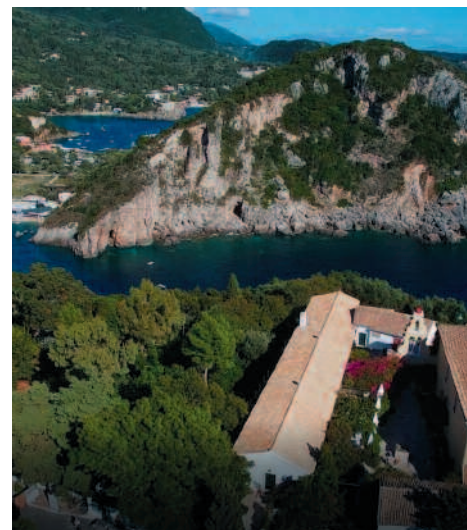
In fact on October 3, 2017 there will be eight cruise ships alongside with a total ship length of 1.745mtrs. Guide capabilities and buses are also sufficient to handle shorex requirements and the city is big enough to host a large number of tourists in a single day.



A popular tour to Paleokastritsa gives visitors the opportunity to explore the beauty of Corfu beginning with a scenic drive through the lush green countryside to Paleokastritsa, famous for the crystal blue-green sea water of its beaches, mysterious grottos, and impressive rocks and bays.

It is here that archaeologists suspect the existence of the legendary castle of King Alkinoos according to Homeric mythology. The Monastery of Paleokastritsa, founded in 1226, is a splendid church with shady cloisters and inviting gardens. The journey finishes in the Old Town of Corfu for a walking tour to discover Saint Spyridon Church, protector of the island, the narrow alleyways of the old Venetian town and the imposing Palace of St Michael and St George.

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Dubrovnik



Nine maiden calls are slated for Dubrovnik this year: Viking Sky, Norwegian Star, Costa Luminosa, AIDAblu, Royal Princess, Seabourn Encore, Harmony V, Star Flyer and Veendam.

The longest and largest capacity ship visiting the Croatian port in 2017 is Princess Cruises' 330mtr long and 3,600 passenger Royal Princess. Compared to five years ago in 2012, MSC Divina with 3,952 passengers was the largest caller.

The biggest draw is a visit to the Old Town, reachable by shuttle bus or included on shore excursions. All panoramic tours of the

countryside also end up in the city, encircled with massive stone walls completed in the 16th century. Its well-preserved buildings range from baroque St. Blaise Church to Renaissance Sponza Palace and Gothic Rector's Palace, now a history museum. Paved with limestone, the pedestrianized Stradun (or Placa) is lined with shops and restaurants.

A boat trip from the port (Dubrovnik Gruz) to one of the most beautiful sandy beaches at St Jacob is popular with families.

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French Riviera



restored converted into boutiques and workshops that offer olive wood carvings, glassware, pottery and distilled lavender and honey.

Those seeking a thrill can go white water rafting on the rapids of the River Var in the French Alpes-Maritime. The descent will take about two hours including several stops along the way, arriving in Touet sur Var.

After a jam-packed 10 years, The French Riviera Cruise Club will celebrate its 10th anniversary this year. 2017 will be festive and full of surprises for cruise lines and their guests.

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The four French Riviera ports of Cannes, Antibes, Nice and Villefranche sur mer are expecting 382 calls and 707,000 cruise passengers this year.

A popular shore excursion from these ports is Gorges du Loup and Gourdou Villages passing through picturesque hillside villages the valley gorge pierces through the mountains and is considered one of Haute Provence's most beautiful natural sights.

A stop is made at the picture-postcard village of Gourdou, perched on a rock spur that soars over 1,600ft above the Loup River. Traditional houses have been



Genoa



Genoa Cruise Port has been equipped to handle the latest post-Panamax cruise vessels since 2011, the year which marked the inauguration of the 345mtr long berth alongside Ponte dei Mille Cruise Terminal.

In addition, the port offers two 310mtr long berths and a 295mtr quay. There is ample car and bus parking areas in Calata Zingari, adjacent to the Ponte dei Mille and Ponte Andrea Doria Cruise Terminals.

So far 209 ships and 950,000 passengers are expected to visit Genoa this year including the new 167,660gt MSC Meraviglia.

A guided walk through Genoa's extensive pedestrianised historic city centre allows passengers to step back in time with its eclectic labyrinth of medieval cobblestone passageways, home to a wealth of sumptuous Renaissance and Baroque 16th and 17th century palazzos built by the rich mercantile families and today listed amongst UNESCO's World Heritage Sites.

A visit to the state-of-the-art Aquarium, the largest in Europe, is also popular particularly with families. The building features an extensive range of marine biodiversity in 70 tanks, home to 6,000 specimens of over 500 marine species.

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Gibraltar



As always, the 'Rock Tour' remains the most popular shore excursion with visitors taken around the Rock, to major tourist sites such as St Michael's Cave and the Apes' Den. The second most popular excursion is the 'Top of the Rock and Shopping Tour'. Visitors travel to the top of the Rock to enjoy outstanding views of three countries and two

continents, followed by a shopping spree for VAT and Tax Free goods in Gibraltar's popular Main Street.

Scheduled to call six times this year Royal Caribbean International's Independence of the Seas with a maximum double occupancy of 4,375 passengers is the largest visitor in 2017. Interestingly five years ago, the same vessel was also the largest, calling 11 times.

258 calls are booked so far with a maximum double occupancy capacity of 429,446 passengers. This is an increase from 2016 which saw 224 ships bring 404,005 cruise visitors.

Seven maiden calls are expected for 2017 including Norwegian Joy, Majestic Princess, Celebrity Reflection and Seabourn Encore.

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Gioia Tauro

The Port Authority of Gioia Tauro exercises its jurisdiction over the ports of Crotona and Corigliano Calabro.

The port of Crotona dominates the central part of the Jonain coast of Calabria. It consists of two adjacent basins that are not connected to one another. The port settlement is deeply connected to the urban structure of the city where development is particularly influenced by the former. It's a starting point for sightseeing tours to many areas in the region and the nearby Archaeological Park of Capo

Colonna.

The port of Corigliano Calabro is located on the high Ionic coast of Calabria. This infrastructure is strategic, given the position that makes it attractive to cruise ships and pleasure craft traffic. The Gulf of Corigliano Calabro is positioned close to two major national parks: the Park of Sila and the Pollini Park.

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Igoumenitsa

Thomson Celebration at 214mtr and 7.8mtr draught is the largest vessel to call in Igoumenitsa. The Thomson Cruises' ships visited last year and the feedback was the majority of the passengers were very happy and enjoyed the town and its surrounding countryside. A shuttle service to and from the ship scored highly for its efficiency.

Among the many highlights that are accessible from Igoumenitsa on full and half day tours are the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Meteora, the fascinating lakeside city of Ioannina, the rare Byzantine treasures of Arta, Octavian's city of Nicopolis, the charming seaside towns of Syvota, Parga and Preveza and the amazing eagle nest villages of Zagori.

Epirus is a destination full of historic, religious and cultural attractions, breathtaking landscapes and untouched natural beauty, and has some of the best beaches in the Ionian. Trekking, hiking, river and mountain sports, paragliding, cycling and horseback riding in the area of Glyki at Acheron River are popular.

Also, there are some truly unique bird watching locations, such as the Ambracian wetlands that boast 280 species! For beach lovers, the stunning Ionian coast surpasses anyone's expectations and practically every kind of sea sport is easily available.

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Huelva

Huelva is looking to welcome seven ships and over 9,000 passengers this year, four of them arriving in the Spanish port for the first time.

The port can handle large ships and has a huge esplanade next to the berthing line to accommodate buses for excursions and all operational needs.



The most popular shore excursions are 'Seville on your own' and 'Donana and El Rocío Hamlet'. The latter tour will take you to the North of Donana Natural Park in a truck with several stops on the way to visit Coto del Rey, a zone crowned by the territory of the Spanish Empire eagle and Iberian lynx. The onward journey goes to the El Rocío hamlet, known for its multitudinous pilgrimage.

A family tour is the Route of Columbus starting from where the explorer himself began his journey of discovery. In 1492, sailors from neighbouring towns sailed with Christopher Columbus for the Indies. Travel back to that time and get onboard the replica vessels that were used for the voyage at the Muelle de las Carabelas wharf.

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Kavala

Ships up to 360mtr long and a maximum depth of 9mtr can be accommodated in Kavala. The port also provides security (ISPS), easy access for cruise ships, a 1,000sq mtr passenger terminal and up to 40 buses with guides on a daily basis. Last year, 1,200 passenger Artania was the largest ship in terms of passenger capacity to visit.

The two most popular shorex are the Byzantine Castle-Acropolis of Kavala located next to the port, the Ancient Theatre and Basilikas of Filippi and the Baptistery of Saint Lidia who was the first Christian baptised in Europe by The Apostle Paul. These last two sites are in the same area and easy to visit

both on the same tour. Also a nature-related tour ideal also for families is the Nestos river delta combined with Keramoti sand peninsula. Wineries, spas, mud baths, Mohamed Ali's House, a Wax Museum and Tobacco Museum are all places of interest in Kavala itself.

Passengers have direct access to the city from the ship and can relax alongside locals in an authentic environment.

Visiting the port of Kavala is a journey through history beginning with the first Christian times until nowadays.

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Kotor



Port of Kotor's biggest challenge is its operational areas which are situated in, and are an integral part of, the Old Town which is protected by UNESCO as a World Heritage natural and historic site. Yet it has been successful in growing cruise business and in 2017 is expecting 459 ships including 13 new visitors.

Koningsdam, majestic Princess, Norwegian Star, Westerdam, Thomson Spirit, Costa Luminosa and Viking Sky and Sun are among these ships visiting Kotor for the first time this year.

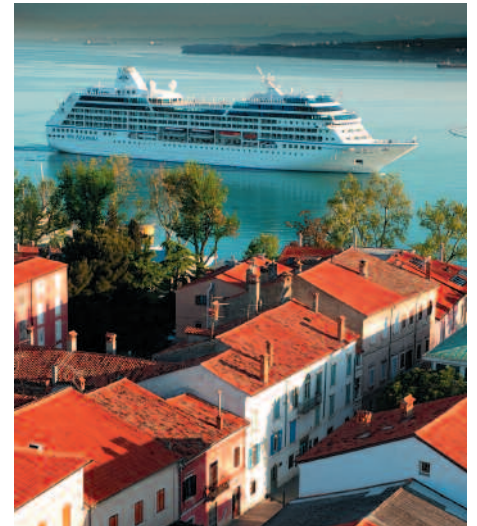
A very popular shore excursion is Perast

and The Lady of the Rocks which is probably symbolic of Boka Bay and Kotor. 15km from the Old Town and port is the beautiful town of Perast, recognised for two little islands - St George and Lady of the Rocks standing just in front of it.

Lady of the Rocks is one of the oldest and most beautiful monuments in the region and has been the protector for passing seamen for ages.

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Koper



Around 60 ships and 75,000 passengers all in transit are expected in Koper, Slovenia this year. Three Viking Cruises ships: Star, Sun and Sky will call for the first time at the Adriatic port as well as maiden calls by Holland America Line's Westerdam, Silversea's Silver Muse, Princess Cruises' Sea Princess and Croisimer Europe's La Belle de l'Adriatique.

Port of Koper will attend Seatrade Cruise Global 2017 in Fort Lauderdale this month with the Slovenian national tourist board and the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism to promote Slovenia as a cruise destination.

The two most popular excursions are the capital, Ljubljana 75 minute's drive from the port and the coastal city of Piran, the oldest town in Slovenia and one of the best preserved in the country. With its rich cultural heritage and charming Venetian architecture, this delightful coastal town attracts visitors throughout the year.

Ljubljana is a graceful city of Baroque and Art Nouveau architecture and bridges such as the unusual triple bridge that leads to the Old Town spanning the meandering river.

Anyone hungry can try regional cuisine which runs the gamut from walnut pancakes to beef goulash with baked polenta.

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La Spezia



In 2017, La Spezia is expecting 150 calls bringing around half a million passengers of which about 50,000 are homeporting ships.

This reflects the same volume of passengers visiting the Italian port last year.

A new cruise terminal Golfo dei Poeti – Cinque Terre Cruise Terminal Port of la Spezia is now operational with an internal surface area of around 1,500sq mtr capable of accommodating passengers in transit and also those joining or disembarking a ship in turnaround. The berth also offers wide spaces for operational and logistical services.

Now La Spezia Port Authority is involved in a project for the creation of a new urban waterfront which will be realised in the next few years, where a new cruise area has already been approved. Plans are currently being drawn up for a new dedicated cruise quay with two berths of 393mtr and 339mtr in length and also the addition of a new cruise terminal.

The most popular shore excursions from La Spezia are Florence, Pisa and the Cinque Terre.

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Lisbon



An interesting excursion directed at guests seeking an original and unusual mode of transport in which to admire the characteristics and traditional sights of the city is Lisbon by Tram tour.

A coach takes passengers to the Estrela district, named after the neoclassical basilica overlooking the square of the same name. Here you will board a traditional wooden tram. Trams are the most widely used means of transport in the city many of them genuine vintage vehicles brimming with charm and history which link the many districts of the city which is built on

seven hills like Rome.

The special tram visits the old town where you get magnificent views and sample the local speciality known as Pastel de nata (custard tart) accompanied by a glass of port wine. A stroll down the Alfama district the oldest in the capital with its narrow streets and Moorish-style buildings with a last stop at the Church of Santa Maria and to the Jeronimos Monastery.

Lisbon is expecting 330 cruise calls and around 520,000 passengers in 2017.

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Livorno

Livorno, the port for Tuscany, offers easy access to art cities like Lucca, Pisa, Florence, Siena, San Gimignano, Volterra and the Cinque Terre. Mainly a port of call, the largest ships afloat can be handled for turnarounds and this year, MSC Armonia will conduct 16 partial turnarounds with about 10,000 embarking/disembarking passengers.

355 ships and 700,000 passengers are expected in 2017 including 12 new ships. One of these AIDAperla is scheduled to call 26 times. Three other AIDA Cruises ships will call for the first time: AIDAbella (6 calls), AIDAstella (4) and AIDAaura once.



Silver Muse and Seabourn Encore will make five calls apiece and Majestic Princess 4. Hebridean Sky will be a first time caller and will undertake one partial turnaround this year.

A popular shore excursion from Livorno is the tour of the Archaeological Parks of Val di Cornia (Baratti, Populonia, San Silvestro, Campiglia). The archaeological mines of San Silvestro contain unique examples of mining from the Etruscan era to the present day. The Museum houses an exhibition of minerals and rocks found in the area, an expert guide accompanies visitors to the Temperino Mine to discover the evolution of techniques used for prospecting and extraction of the mineral deep inside the earth core. Storyboards tell the history of mining in the last decades up to the crisis in 1976. A trip by train through the valley to the production sites follows.

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Baratti E Populonia

Madeira



A half-day excursion to Monte, its Tropical Gardens and Toboggan ride is probably the most sought-after tour for anyone coming to Madeira island for the first time, and also proves popular with repeat visitors to Funchal.

Anyone looking for a full day excursion could do no better than go to Santana and north of the island. Santana is known for the traditional homes constructed with sloping triangular rooftops, and protected with straw. These were mainly rural homes, used by local farmers, during the settlement of the island, with white-painted walls, red doors and windows with blue trim.

An active tour ideal for all ages and capabilities is a walk in the beautiful Laurissilva Forest.

More than half a million passengers will visit Funchal port and the Madeira Islands in 2017 including ten first time callers. No size vessel is too large to call. In 2016, Norwegian Epic with 4,476 passengers and 1,702 crew was the largest ship in capacity terms to visit.

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Messina



A new shorex from Messina is the 'Museum of the 900' housed in an air-raid shelter bunker. In this museum, visitors can relive the events that shaped the city's history from the early 1990s to the Anglo-American landings in Sicily in 1943. The museum displays include public documents, newspapers, magazines, posters, uniforms, weapons and everyday objects from the Second World War.

MSC Meraviglia will visit Messina in her

debut med season this year 23 times. MSC Cruises' other newbuild of 2017 - MSC Seaside will also stop once before heading to her Stateside home.

Other new visitors are Majestic Princess (2 calls), Seven Seas Explorer (1 call) and Seven Seas Voyager (1 call). The number of passengers is expected to rise by 4% this year compared to last.

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Marseille



MSC Meraviglia, the newest ship to sail in the Mediterranean will call in Marseille every Saturday from June to December 2017. It will carry up to 5,714 passengers an extra 1,351 compared to the largest ship five years ago MSC Divina.

Marseille can accommodate six mega ships simultaneously and two luxury vessels at J4. Last year Harmony of the Seas called every week between June and October bringing over 6,000 passengers a time. For this ship 20 excursions, 38 guides and 50 buses were provided.

In 2017 1.5m cruise visitors are expected in the southern French city. First time callers normally take the panoramic tour along the coastline up to Notre Dame de la Garde basilica for a panoramic view of the city and its surrounds and then over to the Old Harbour marina and walk into the city with its museums and shopping centre. For families a great tour is a boat trip to the If castle, a national monument famous for the novel the Count of Monte Cristo.

The Marseille Fos port authority approved the scheme in June 2012 and is contributing almost half the €32.7 million cost alongside State and regional funding. The works will enlarge the entrance from 190 to 240mtr and also enhance turning space for the latest generation vessels.

Important for Marseille is the recommissioning of the giant No.10 drydock. Renovation of drydock 10, third largest in the world after Lisbon and Dubai at 465 x 85 metres, was mainly inspired by the growing world fleet of mega-cruiseships - 65% of which operate in the Mediterranean.

The drydock was built in 1975 as a supertanker facility but was mothballed in 2000 after the market shifted east. The new operator is Chantier Naval Marseille (CNM) who has operated two other large drydocks at Marseille since 2010 - No.8 (320 x 50 metres) and No.9 (250 x 37 metres). Drydock 10 brings a massive new dimension to the repair base with a capacity of 480,000m3 of water.

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Motril-Granada



Here, sun and snow combine to create a city of enchantment and mystery. Granada itself is beautiful, and its remnants of stunning architecture quite superlative. Visit the cathedral, a masterpiece of Renaissance style and the beautiful Gothic-style Royal Chapel and learn about its many treasures. However impressive nothing in all of Spain compares to the wealth of architectural art found in the 14th-century Alhambra—a Muslim-Hispano complex of palaces and gardens. This breathtaking example of Muslim architecture is completely encircled by walls and towers, and inside are palaces, military buildings, a fortress, an administrative center, courtyards and fountains wrought in exquisite detail. Plenty of time is allowed for you

40 cruise ships are drawn to Motril – the port for Granada’s Alhambra Palace in 2017. Among them Variety Cruises is a new customer.

Top shorex from Motril is Granada, Spain’s magical Moorish city, located between the El Genil and El Darro Rivers, beneath the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

to explore this remarkable structure whose mosaics, prism-style cupolas and stone-cast latticework speak to profound grace and sophistication.

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Odessa



There is a new service for tourists visiting the city - the Odessa card allowing free access to museums and tours, as well as significant savings in a number of restaurants, cafes and entertainment centres.

Information plates with QR-codes make it easy to get information on a place of interest or museum in seven languages: Ukrainian, English, Russian, German, French, Turkish and Chinese by scanning.

A new place of interest is the Shustov Museum of Cognac, where you can stroll through the century-old cellars and learn about the history of the origin of Cognac and the technical secrets of production. In the

rich aroma tasting rooms, guests can enjoy the noble drink.

Odessa Film Studio is a fascinating tour strolling through places where many famous films were shot and learn how to create sets and costumes for movies.

Open air festivals abound in Odessa with opera and theatre performances and cinemafest on the Potemkin Stairs, history festival and strawberry festival to name a few...one follows another with concerts and exhibitions across the city.

In 2017, Odessa will welcome three ships.

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Naples

The two most popular shorex undertaken by passengers visiting Naples are Pompeii and Capri. However an active tour for the family proving to be a draw is Mount Vesuvius, the natural symbol of the bay of Naples, a destination for travelers from all ages, and a permanent laboratory of scientific research as well as an iconic landscape painting from ancient time stop the contemporary era.



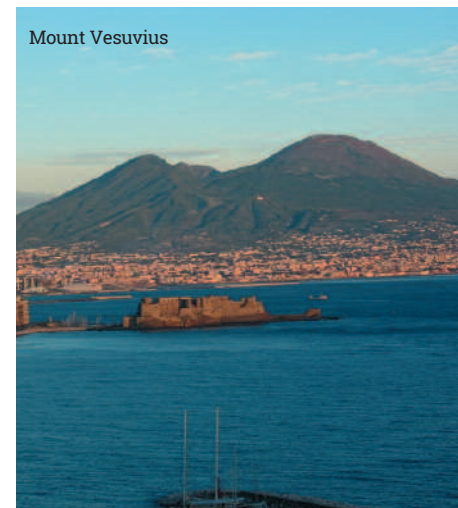
The peaks of the volcano offer a 360 degree view which makes the climb worthwhile. From the tip the horizon unfold towards the plain to the east from the densely built district of Naples down to the bay and to the west lies the Ischia and Procida islands while south one can admire the magic profile of Capri.

Calls to Naples are down this year, but those who do arrive by cruise ship have the city right in front of them as they disembark at the port.

This city is one of nature and culture, art and life, light and dark, sacred and profane. The church, museums and palaces are overflowing with works of art and relics from ancient cults, esoteric or poplar.

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Mount Vesuvius



Portoferraio



More than 42,000 cruise passengers on over 120 ships visited the island of Elba last year, an increase of 14% over the previous year.

The biggest ship to visit the island in 2016 was Princess Cruises' Royal Princess with 3,523 passengers.

The most popular shorex is the panoramic and historic Elba tour which starts in Portoferraio and passes through beautiful countryside heading towards the south to Golfo Stella and arriving in Porto Azzurro where guests have time to stroll along the charming streets of this town dominated by a medieval fortress. The town boasts a pretty fishing

harbour and numerous shops selling minerals and crystals.

A stop at a winery on the way back to the port to sample some local wines before continuing onto Punte delle Grotte with its magnificent views of the gulf of Portoferraio and the cruise ship berthed in port.

On arrival in Portoferraio there is a walk through the town to the Napoleonic buildings including visit to Napoleon's House and the Municipal House where he stayed for a few days during his exile in Elba.

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Portofino



Bigger ships are returning to Portofino thanks to a new regulation approved in 2016 allowing ships to anchor closer to the shore than before. Largest ship to visit in 2017 will be Celebrity Constellation.

Popular with visitors arriving by ship is a visit to San Fruttuoso via private boat or ferry, a small and picturesque fishing village with an old abbey from the 10th Century home to handicrafts and paintings, beachfront trattorias, a secluded beach and underwater statue of Christ.

Another draw is a 20 minute walk to the

famous Portofino Lighthouse surrounded by gardens and fields with amazing views of the Bay.

Those looking for an active tour will find hiking in Portofino Regional Park of interest. It's an area rich in biodiversity and paradise of Mediterranean vegetation. It is possible to hike year-round along the coastal paths that run like balconies overlooking the sea or in the forests providing shade in the hotter months.

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Palermo



A quick browse through the streets of Palermo, to gain an initial understanding of the city's unique culture, you can start your journey by wandering the streets of the old town and admiring the most important baroque jewels located in the historic centre of the city. The Church of Jesus is a triumph of coloured marble, reliefs, sculptures and frescoes. The Quattro Canti meaning 'four corners' is adorned with statutes, cherubs and scrolls of extraordinary beauty dividing the city exactly into four parts. The tour continues to the Oratory of the Rosary in St Dominic and the Oratory of the Rosary in Saint Cita, decorated by sculptor Giacomo Serotta who was able to interpret the Baroque style in a sublime way.

In Palermo don't forget the markets that are a true mix of culture, customs and food traditions: Ballarò and Vucciria are the oldest and most popular in the city. Enjoy Sicilian street food learning at the same time about its history and tradition, Try arancine, calzoni, bread & panelle, authentic pasta 'all'anciova' and freshly fried cassatelle. Palermo has been selected to be 'Italian capital for culture' 2018.

150 ships and 450,000 cruise passengers will get the chance to explore Palermo in 2017.

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Savona

The port's two Palacrociere cruise terminals enable three large ships to berth simultaneously. Dredging works undertaken last summer covering an area of 20,000sq mtr and increasing the

draft from 8.5mtr to 9.5mtr now makes it easier for large ships to navigate into and out of the port and berthing alongside. The cost of the work was €380,000.

In 2017, 940,000 cruise passengers are set to visit Savona which represents an increase of 3% compared to last year when 910,224 cruise visitors were welcomed.

A visit to the medieval cities in the province of Savona is popular. The new walking tour will start from Palacrociere cruise terminal and include visits of the Baroque Cappella Sistina, the Priamar Fortress and the landmark Torre del Brandale. Cruisers will be accompanied by guides who speak the languages of everybody on the excursion, and will explain the history of these monuments and their art, architecture and culture.

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Rijeka

There will be 15 cruise ships bringing 15,000 passengers from eight cruise lines with seven inaugural ship's calls from Regent Seven Seas, Thomson, Princess Cruises, Silversea, Oceania Cruises, Holland America Line and CroisiEurope is in store for the



Croatian port this year.

Rijeka has been chosen (along with Galway in Ireland) as the European Capital of Culture for 2020. The city easily fits in Mediterranean itineraries especially for open jaw cruises and is a new, exciting option for port collectors.

Last year saw nine ships visit for the first time an incredible achievement for a port just starting out on the cruise map.

One of the most recognisable shorex is discovering Rijeka's old town and castle Trsat with a medieval fortified town. Once it was the home of the Oldest Croatian noble families – the Frankopans. A wonderful view of Kvarner Bay extends from Trsat.

Also popular are the nearby coastal towns of Istria and Opatija, summer resorts of the royal family in the Austro Hungarian monarchy with natural sites including Krk island, connected by bridge with the mainland and known for its olive oil, wine and honey and the scenic Plitvice Lakes national Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site with lakes, caves and waterfalls.

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Sete



Picturesque with its many canals, while remaining a must for premium smaller ships, the port of Sete is now able to welcome large ships too offering the same quality of service.

The new H quay for large vessels is located not far from the 270mtr wide port entrance. To show how the port's new infrastructure is geared to handle larger ships, the biggest visitor this year will be Royal Caribbean International's Brilliance of the Seas with 2,500 passengers. In comparison, the largest ship five years ago was the 710-passenger Adonia.

Cruise activity in Sete is booming with 48

ships calling this year representing nearly 50,000 passengers on 23 different ships including seven maiden callers.

Top place of interest for shore is Carcassonne, a UNESCO World Heritage site, a city with more than 2,000 years of history and the best preserved fortress in Europe. Also high on the list is Montpellier, more than 10 centuries old it is a dazzling mix of ancient and modern. Noted for its culture and heritage and also for shopping, it is home to Europe's oldest medical school.

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Sibenik



Old City

Sibenik is expecting 120 ships in 2017 and anticipates doubling the number of passenger arrivals. This is the result of the new Zablace anchorage.

The construction of Vruļje quay created berthing for larger ships alongside; however a new anchorage point is now established outside the St. Anthony channel, where large ships had difficult navigating. This channel is to the south, parallel to the village of Zablace with an existing port and infrastructure to accept cruise ship tenders and buses for passenger transportation into town. The distance from here to Sibenik is five kilometres.

So for the first time this year Port of Sibenik

will receive larger ships such as 271mtr long Aurora, 261mtr long Oceana, and 294mtr long Queen Victoria. Pacific Princess, Silver Muse and Silver Spirit are also maiden callers.

Krka National Park lies 20km from Sibenik. Open year-round it can be toured by water, by road, or by foot with many hiking trails.

Sightseeing at Roski waterfall is popular due to its numerous cascades which locals call the pearl necklaces and also due to its lush flora, and its mill, some of which have been restored and now selling crafts, souvenirs or restaurants.

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Souda-Chania



Balos Beach, Chania

For guests looking for an active tour there is Samaria Gorge, a canyon with wild nature and trekking, hiking and cycling tours also for beginners. Alternatively for beach lovers the Elafonissi and Falasarna excursions are considered a not to be missed item. For families, the old Venetian Harbour with market and Archaeological Museum could be a great choice.

For nature lovers, trekking or biking at Kournas Lake offers amazing colourful scenes.

In 2017, Port of Souda and Chania is set to welcome 70 ships with more than 140,000 cruise passengers including seven ships from

four lines that are new to the port.

One of the safest ports in the southeast Mediterranean Souda is the gateway for western Crete and Chania and can accommodate one ship of 340mtr in length and one up to 250mtr long at the cruise terminal plus up to three ships average length up to 220mtr at Adrias quay.

A new and extended passenger terminal of 900 sq mtr internal area with security and immigration inspection gates is underway.

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Split



Port of Split completed the construction of two new cruise berths on the outer side of the breakwater. They can accommodate ships with a maximum length of 320mtr and 270mtr respectively with 10.5mtr maximum draft, significantly increasing the capacity to handle larger ships and raise the level of service, safety and security for passengers. This represented an investment of Euros23m.

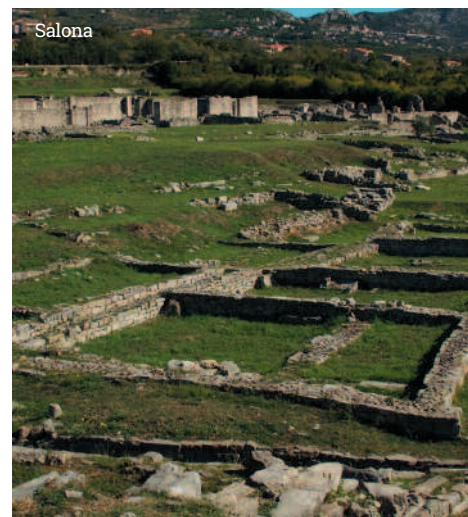
During 2016 a record breaking 5m passengers (cruise and ferry) passed through the Croatian port. 286 cruise ships called bringing 275,651 passengers – an increase in numbers from 2015 when 262 ships visited with 271,445 cruise passengers.

Norwegian Spirit, Norwegian Star, Costa Luminosa, Westerdam, Oceana and Queen Victoria, Viking Sky and MSC Poesia will all be visiting Split for the first time in 2017.

The pedestrianised ancient UNESCO World Heritage listed site of Split city offers numerous cafes, taverns, restaurants for tasting local cuisine such as prosciutto, sheep's cheese, fish and stewed lamb or beef as well as fine Dalmatia wines.

Nearby are the ruins of Salona – the ancient Roman capital of the province of Dalmatia, the historic fortress of Klis and UNESCO listed town of Trogir. For the adventurous try rafting on the mighty Cetina River or the Krka River National Park.

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Salona

Taranto

Thompson Cruises has added southern Italian city of Taranto as a port in 2017, calling seven times with Thomson Spirit as part of an Adriatic itinerary from May to October.

In total the port is expecting between 10-12,000 cruise passengers this summer.

The multipurpose Falanto Port Service Center – also hosting a passenger terminal – is due to be finished later this year.

It is being built on the S. Cataldo Pier and comprises two three storey buildings at a

total investment of €6.6m.

In addition to passenger handling facilities the centre will host the Port System Authority offices, an auditorium, conference room, exhibition space and information desk as well as a bar, restaurants and restrooms.

During the construction phase a temporary tensile structure will be operational for passenger handling and shorex departures during cruise ship calls.

The Falanto Port Service Center, recalling the historical origins which link Taranto to the ancient Greek city of Sparta, is part of a project aiming at the modernisation of the waterfront and integration of the city and the port.

The National Archeological Museum of Taranto (MarTa for short) is a popular destination for families as it adds entertainment to education. The displays cover the Ancient Greek and the Roman Age as the city was the cultural and economic capital of the Greek colonies. It is open every day and free on the first Sunday of the month.

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Tarragona



Ten ships are expected to make maiden calls in Tarragona this year when a total of 40 ships will bring 40,000 passengers. A regular visitor and homeporting for the first time in Costa neoRiviera.

Starting from June 2 to September 22, the 1,727 guest ship will turnaround 17 times in Tarragona offering weekly west Med cruises.

The deployment will bring an estimated 25,000 extra passengers to Tarragona this season.

The above, coupled with two calls by Costa Favolosa, planned in September and October, means that Costa ships will visit the port of Tarragona up to 19 times, bringing a total of 32,000 passengers.

During turnaround days Costa neoRiviera will be berthed in Tarragona port for 17 hours from 09.00 am to 02.00 am the of the following day providing opportunities for passengers to visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site of the ancient Roman town of Tarraco or an 8-hour tour to Poblet Monastery and the Montblanc churches or for thrill seekers, the cruise line has signed an agreement with PortAventura World Parks & Resorts, one of Europe's leading theme parks with fast-track passes for Costa guests and a new park opening this year, Ferrari Land.

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Tenerife ports

2017 is shaping up for increased passengers numbers in both La Palma and Tenerife, while La Gomera, El Heirro and Los Cristianos will maintain its numbers. Britannia, MSC Preziosa, Independence of the Seas and Queen Mary 2 are regular visitors to La Palma and Tenerife.



AIDA Cruises' AIDAprima will start using Tenerife as a homeport from November 2017 which brings new challenges for the port as it is the biggest ship to be based in the Canary Islands and will be supplied with LNG in port.

Popular tours focussing on the Canary Island's extensive range of flora are La Orotava Acclimatisation Gardens in Puerto de la Cruz in Tenerife created by King Carlos III in 1778. In 1792, 35 new plantations were started creating a major collection of tropical and sub-tropical plants from all over the world. The gardens develop research programmes for the flora and vegetation of the Canaries and the conservation of endemic species.

The other tour is Anaga, Biosphere Reserve, A UNESCO-listed site preserving the natural assets, beautiful precipitous mountain chain full of sharp peaks, deep valleys and ravines located in the north-west of Tenerife. High up is a wonderful area of laurel forests which can be classified as a living fossil, having survived more than 40 million years. A walk amongst the forest's twisted tree trunks lined with moss is like a journey back in time. Several trails are offered for different abilities.

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Toulon



The two most popular shorex from Toulon are Marseille/Aix en Provence and Saint Tropez.

Anyone looking for an active excursion can enjoy a guided tour of the Circuit Paul Ricard known as the most innovative car racing circuit in Europe with visit to the Paddock, the Pit Building Hall, and Track Video Control room, the Telemetry Room, the medical centre and security lane. Next up is the karting test track or driving lessons in GT cars or Segways tours. Coudou Park in Six-Fours-Les-Plages combined with a beach trip.

Nature lovers might be drawn by The Rayol Mediterranean Gardens and its 20 hectares designed as a trip around the world to see flora growing in similar climates to the Mediterranean including the Canaries,

California, Australia, South Africa and Chile. Located by the coast, visitors can also learn about the Med's marine life and experience an underwater naturalist's course or for children a 'Foot on water' workshop.

After a record year in 2016, Toulon will witness a slight decrease in cruise numbers this year with 100 calls and around 250,000 passengers. Six new ships will visit.

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Valletta



2016 was yet another record year for cruise passengers visiting Malta. 682,222 passenger movements were recorded, meaning an increase of 2% on 2015.

Malta forecasts circa 700,000 passenger movements aboard 330 calls in 2017.

Stephen Xuereb, ceo of Valletta Cruise Port and coo of parent Global Ports Holding commented, 'The cruise industry is growing with more new ships being ordered in line with increased demand. Between 2016 and 2026 the total of new beds coming on-stream exceeds 220,000 worldwide. Continuous timely investment in our infrastructure and our service delivery is paramount for us to remain competitive.'

81 different cruise ships from 42 cruise companies visited Malta in 2016.

P&O Cruises' Oceana will undertake round trip Malta sailings in 2017.

The cruise line is expected to bring 100,000 fly-cruise passengers to Malta on 27 calls in 2017, as well as five port calls where another 10,000 passengers will be visiting Malta on a transit call.

Moreover, additional calls are planned for 2018.

Malta's 2017 cruise schedule includes 20 Norwegian Cruise Line calls with more than 45,000 passenger movements on Norwegian Star and Norwegian Spirit.

A planning application for a €6m project to widen Quays 4/5 has been submitted. Plans are being finalised to redevelop the Old Power House to create further quayside cultural and entertainment, with additional check-in facilities. 2017 is also the run-up year to Valletta 2018, where Valletta will hold the title of the European Capital of Culture, with the calendar of events adding exciting layers to what the destination already offers, he added.

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Tunisian ports



Viking Sea's maiden visit to La Goulette Cruise Terminal in January also signalled the first customer of the year for the Tunisian port.

The ship was carrying almost 900 passengers, many of them North Americans who were greeted by Tunisia's Cultural Minister and Tourism Minister and officials from the port authority and cruise terminal.

Viking Ocean will call five times this winter. La Goulette is expecting seven cruise ship this year as it rebuilds its cruise tourism.

Step into the past during visits to La Goulette with a stop at the National Bardo Museum, a former palace of a 19th Century chieftain which houses a fine collection of mosaics telling the story of Tunisia through the ages and then onto

Sidi Bou Said and its cluster of whitewashed housing, cafes, shops, mosques and madrassas and then onto Carthage and its 700 monuments dotted in labyrinthine streets.

For those looking for an off-the-beaten path experience, witness the village life of Berbers exploring the hidden pockets on Mt. Zagħwan and Dorsale Mountains by 4-wheel vehicle. You'll stop at the Berber village of Jeradou, strolling its ancient streets to the zawiyya (shrine) and mosque. A scenic drive leads to the village of Sidi Jedidi, famed for its thermal waters that bubble up from deep inside the earth.

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Varna

Port Varna and its cruise terminal are located in the ancient cradle of European civilisation. The oldest processed gold in the world was found in this city which enjoys unique natural resources – mineral springs, beautiful beaches, green forests and the sea.

Over the past two years the area surrounding the cruise terminal has been given a makeover. The city has a well-developed tourism structure receiving over one million visitors a year.

Port of Varna is in close proximity to UNESCO World Heritage sites within two hours' drive – the Madara River and Thracian Tomb of Sveshtari.

Among the most popular active tours for

cruise passengers is the chance to attend golf master classes and off-road adventures in the unique Golden Sands National Park.

Culinary masterclasses are often chosen for group and family excursions with a chance to learn the secrets of Bulgarian cuisine and become acquainted with life and culture in a Bulgarian home.

Nature lovers like a visit to Durankulak Lake where they can watch a wide variety of birds and visit the Botanic Garden.

Port of Varna is a good starting point for a walking tour of the city.

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Venice



Despite continuing to face life without cruise ships over 96,000gt due to the cruise lines' voluntary decision not to deploy larger ships to VTP's cruise terminals until an alternative access route for reaching the facilities is sought, Venice is expecting 473 ships and around 1,422,000 passengers in 2017.

Newcomers are AIDAblu, Norwegian Star, Silver Muse and Viking Sky.

The largest ships to visit this year are MSC Musica and MSC Poesia both with 3,233 lower berths.

The most popular shore excursions

undertaken by guests are the following: a tour of the Doge's Palace and St Mark's Basilica, including Ponte dei Sospirari (Bridge of Sighs); tour of Burano and Murano Islands with their lace-producing and glass-blowing traditions; gondola tour. A wide range of walking tours allow exploration of some of Venice's lesser-known, but celebrated sites, such as Jewish Ghetto, Campo San Polo, Rialto Bridge, Basilica di San Giovanni e Paolo, San Basilio and Greek Orthodox district.

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Zadar



Compared to 2015, last year Port of Zadar witnessed a 94% increase in cruise passengers from 70,000 to 135,000. While more ships are expected in 2017, the same number of passengers will visit the city.

Reason for the rise in business is a new port built at Gazenica which has no size limits.

Compared to five years, the number of cruise passengers visiting this year is seven times more than in 2012.

Despite offering new longer cruise berths, in 2016/17 the biggest ships to visit Zadar will still be in the 300mtr range due to voluntary restrictions on ships homeporting in Venice (which is often the starting or finishing point for ships calling in Zadar on transit calls.)

The 3,000 year old city of Zadar is full of historic monuments and attractions. Closeby is Nin, home to the world's smallest cathedral and museums containing ancient ship remains. Nin was founded by the Liburns and served as a hub for Croatian kings and bishops. A visit to the Royal Vineyards and taste award-winning wines is a must on this tour.

For nature lovers the Plitvice Lakes and Krka Waterfalls are both accessible from Port of Zadar.

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Why cruise to YOUR PORT?

We asked the personalities representing MedCruise ports and destinations what is so special about their port (and in less than 100 words!).

French Riviera

Discovering the Côte d'Azur destination is a deep dive into a unique experience mixing flavours and scents. A blend of sea with azure colour and mountains, typical villages nestled at the heart of flowery mimosas and cultural route of unescapable variety.

What is always a surprise is that in the blend of the French Côte d'Azur recognised for its places and special events hides a destination full of surprises and discoveries off the beaten track. The welcome in the French Riviera is a success as French Riviera Cruise Club is celebrating its 10 year anniversary.

Caroline Valadie, cruise & development manager, French Riveira Ports



Souda-Chania

Souda is one of the safest ports in the South East Mediterranean and gateway for western Crete and Chania destination (first eastbound /westbound to South East Mediterranean and Aegean Sea), with ISPS code security services. Chania is ideal for the demeaning cruise guests due to its diversified tourism profile (amazing turquoise water beaches, unique inland, multicultural monuments, breathtaking natural sites.) One of the few ports in South East Mediterranean with readiness to accommodate big cruise vessels.

Stella Manioudaki, executive director, Souda Port



Barcelona

- Because, as National Geographic magazine said, "Barcelona is one of the 10 cities in the World which must be visited once in a lifetime"
 - Because our six state-of-the-art cruise terminals and the new Carnival's group terminal that will be operating in 2018.
 - Because our terminals have the highest standard of security: Implementation of ISPS Code to SOLAS is one of our strengths.
- Gemma Gracia, cruise department, Port of Barcelona**



Taranto

The sun and the food are the highlights of our land, where wine and oil – known and appraised by the top chefs all over the world – are produced.

It represents a new offer for repeaters, and the unique and closest port to Matera, the city included in the UNESCO World Heritage and nominated Capital of Culture 2019.

Prof. Sergio Prete, president, Taranto Port Authority



Portofino

Portofino is one of the most famous and enchanting ports in the world, with great shopping for anyone, great regional food and many different excursions and tours for all ages and tastes. A classic Italian, a private gem in the Mediterranean.

Giorgia Collalti, sales and marketing manager, Portofino Servizi Turistici srl.



Brindisi

Brindisi, the gate to Salento, one of the most beautiful regions of Italy, a perfect destination for a dreamy vacation: crystal blue sea, Mediterranean nature, dazzling white picturesque villages, a culinary tradition rich in flavour, festivals and much more.

Laura Cimaglia, cruise business development, Brindisi Port Authority



Marseille

First port of France, fifth of the Mediterranean, Marseille Provence is the port of a multitude of destinations, tours, themes and horizons. With almost 30 international companies present at our port, Marseille Provence is a safe and efficient hub for the cruising industry. We don't have a 'season' here, Marseille Provence is the place to board!

Jean-Francois Suhas,
head of Marseille Provence Cruise Club



Burgas

The fourth largest city in Bulgaria, Burgas has very good infrastructure, an international airport, maritime station, railway station and bus stations. Surrounded by the Black Sea and three lakes in the east and west, within the city is situated one of the oldest hot springs, while in the south is the Strandja Mountain. Close by is the UNESCO listed town of Nessebar, the ancient town of Sozopol, architectural and historical reserves of Brashlian and Zheravna, the island of Saint Anastasia and the archaeological complex of Aqua Khalide.

Dian Dimov, executive director, Port Burgas JSC



Ancona



Cruising to the port of Ancona means to discover a town and a territory extremely various, rich in culture, tradition, nature and art. Over the centuries Ancona has been a gateway to the East, together with Venice and Dubrovnik; it is the only place in the world where you will see a Roman arch of triumph inside a port; it is a place full of stories and heritage, where believe it or not, you will see the sun rise from and set into the sea!

Rodolfo Giampieri, president of the Central Adriatic Ports Authority



Igoumenitsa



- Strategic position that offers a convenient call option for eastbound and westbound East Mediterranean itineraries with home ports in the Adriatic or further west.
- Immediate access from the port to a new highway system that opens up an entire range of tourist attractions previously inaccessible to the cruise lines.
- Adequate infrastructure for vessels of all sizes, contemporary port facilities and extensive passenger handling experience.

Andreas Ntais, president and managing director, Igoumenitsa Port Authority

Cartagena

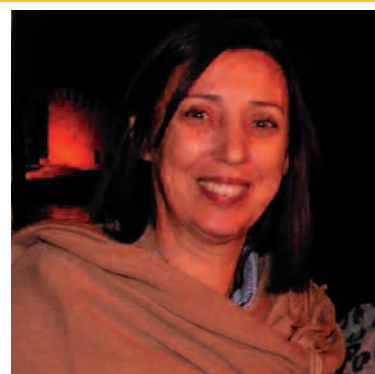
- Cartagena has a rich cultural heritage thanks to its museums, castles and modernist buildings.
- The favourable weather conditions enable visitors to enjoy both nature and sports all year-round, such as water sports, golf, tennis and many others.
- Amazing city for its monuments, the beauty of the buildings and friendly and welcoming people.

Hortensia Sanchez, manager commercial & marketing, Port Authority of Cartagena



Tunisian ports

Tunis Cruise destination is more than a call: it's a unique experience full of exotic discoveries, unexpected encounters, distinguished flavours, remarkable landscape and very rich culture. Taste it and will love it.
Cherifa Ben Salem, director foreign relations, Office de la Marine Marchande et des Ports



Cagliari

The Port of Cagliari has the benefit of being near the city centre. The dedicated cruise quay 'Rinascita' offers two berths and the port is less than 7km from the airport of Elmas.

Valeria Mangiarotti, Marketing manager, Port of Cagliari



Ceuta

Because of our geographical situation outside mainland Spain, the autonomous city of Ceuta has always had a different fiscal system. Ceuta is declared a free port which means the entrance and exit of goods is taxed at a lower cost ranging from 0.5% to 10% maximum, a lot less than the normal TVA of 18%.

That means better prices for all kind of articles such as jewellery, alcohol, tobacco and electrical items, among others. Ceuta offers quality, variety and professionalism at very affordable prices.

Victor M Jimenez, marketing manager, Port Authority of Ceuta

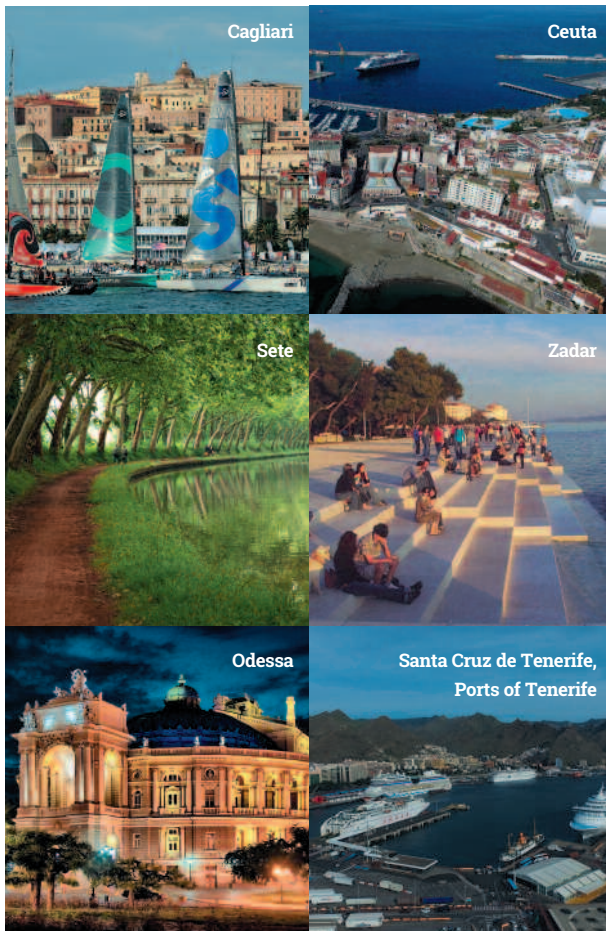


Sete

While remaining a must for the premium smaller ships, the port of Sete is now able to welcome larger ships, with the same quality of service.

Picturesque with its many canals, authentic and lively, the town of Sete is a unique destination, renowned for its strong identity and its charm. There are five UNESCO World Heritage Sites reachable from Sete, with a wide variety of landscapes, traditions and talents, with colourful markets, welcoming terraces, quaint villages and bustling towns the 'Occitan' region is an extraordinary haven to discover.

Catherine Lafon, cruise port promotion, Port of Sete Sud de France



Zadar

Ancient city of Zadar and many beautiful villages around Zadar, five National Parks and three Nature Parks, good highway connections and vicinity to other Dalmatian cities like Sibenik and Split making Zadar prefect shore-ex destination for exploring Croatia. Central position on Croatian and Adriatic coast, great traffic approach by air and by new highway, brand new port infrastructure – are just a few main advantages and reasons for cruise passengers and ships to visit Port of Zadar.

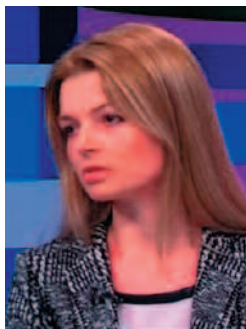
Djoni Stambuk, assistant to general manager for commercial affairs, port ops and marketing, Zadar Port Authority



Odessa

Odessa is an amazing and diverse city. It's like a separate country with its own way of life. Odessa is a city of 365-days visit, the city of a hundred festivals. Besides admiring the famous architectural landmarks Odessa is worth a visit for food, fun and adventure.

Elvira Leschinskaya, head of development and external relations, Odessa Sea Port Authority



Tenerife

- Unique and diverse landscapes in a secure area offering the best of European services and facilities
- Save bunkers by sailing in the Canary Islands, many ports in close proximity offering a wide range of bunkering (LNG, LS...) and port services.
- More than 15m tourists in 2016

Airam Diaz, commercial director, Port Authority of Santa Cruz de Tenerife



Madeira

• City of Funchal: Lightness and Friendly
• Madeira Island: Beauty in the Atlantic Ocean and Safe
• Porto Santo Island: The Golden Beach and simple pleasure.
Ligia Correia, CEO, APRAM



Varna

Port of Varna is in close proximity to World Heritage Sites, the Madara Rider and the Thracian Tomb of Sveshtari. This enables cruise lines to offer a diverse tour program to its passengers. Varna airport is well-connected with regular flights to the major European airports. There are also regular daily flights from/to Istanbul, which makes Varna a good choice of home porting. Varna and its resorts can offer excellent pre- and post-programs for the cruise line passengers because of the high quality hotels and variety of activities available in the region.

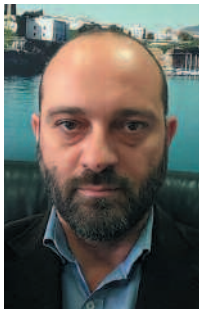
Lyubomir Dobrev, manager, Port of Varna EAST



Corfu

It is a safe and secure port and it is not just another cruise port, but a walk through history. 3,000 years of history are still alive within a short walking distance. The island of Corfu is a destination of infinite variety with wonderful nature, traditional villages and 'The town of Corfu is Venice and Naples, a touch of France and more than a dash of England, apart of course from being Greek'.

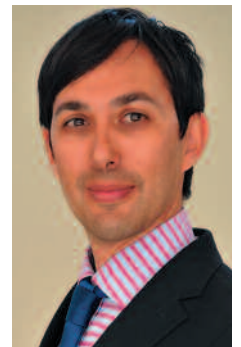
Aris Batsoulis, head of cruise dept. and PFSO, Corfu Port



Motril-Granada

The port of Motril is the closest to one of the most emblematic monuments of Spain – The Alhambra. The destination has a lot of variety and quality in monuments, culture, nature, festivals etc to offer to cruise lines.

Lorenzo Vera Franco, commercial manager, Motrilport-Granada



Gibraltar

Gibraltar is a territory full of a mix of British and Mediterranean charm and with over 300 days of sunshine yearly and a colourful history. It is an easily accessible destination with activities and attractions for all. With a café society with cafes and bars dotted along Main Street, as well as in its two marinas. For the shoppers amongst cruise guests, Main Street, only a 15-minute walk from the Cruise Terminal, is a magnet for bargain hunters thanks to Gibraltar's VAT and Tax Free shopping.

Nicky Guerrero, chief executive, Gibraltar Tourist Board



Feel welcomed in Lisbon, where the city embraces its port in a beautiful harmony. Once you've been here, you will surely want to come back.

Lisbon offers her guests an attractive and prestigious destination, a capital city where tradition and modernity live together in a lively atmosphere.

Experience Lisbon and enjoy the most beautiful views of the white and unique light city by cruising through the Tagus estuary on board a cruise ship.

Ana Lourenco, cruise manager, Port of Lisbon Authority

Lisbon



• Part two of this feature 'Why cruise to YOUR PORT?' will appear in the September edition of MedCruise News

MedCruise News



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