



Unified Mediterranean Cruise Ship Berth Booking and Confirmation Process:

A MedCruise Good Practice

The Association of Mediterranean Cruise Ports (MedCruise) has developed its “good practice” recommendation to its member ports on a uniform system of advanced booking and confirmation of cruise ship berths.

This good practice is called the Unified Mediterranean Berth Booking Process and, if endorsed, will apply to requests from cruise ship lines wishing to berth at MedCruise member ports in 2019.

MedCruise developed its Unified Mediterranean Berth Booking Process in response to concerns voiced by cruise line staff over congestion at various ports on key days. It provides the cruise lines with an advanced commitment of berth availability and booking confirmation on dates over one year in advance. This process mirrors processes already applied at some MedCruise member ports.

The process was discussed at private workshops involving MedCruise member ports and ship agents and several cruise line executives at MedCruise General Assemblies. Stakeholders agreed that the simultaneous confirmation of berths at MedCruise ports using a standardised system could significantly ease Mediterranean cruise itinerary planning efforts and also promote the efficient management at MedCruise ports.

The Unified Mediterranean Berth Booking Process

- 1. All call requests for year 2019 must be sent by cruise lines and/or ship agents and received by MedCruise port authorities and/or terminal operators by November 30th, of 2017.**
- 2. Call requests received after the deadline will be considered but preference is given to those received by the deadline.**
- 3. All call requests for year 2019 will be confirmed by January 2nd, 2018. Special cases may be considered separately.**
- 4. In case of lack of space on any requested call date, the port authority/terminal operator shall provide the cruise line or ship agent with alternative dates no later than the first week of January of 2018. Affected**

cruise lines shall have priority for the alternative dates offered until January 31st 2018.

5. Depending on port characteristics, the port authority/terminal operator has the option to confirm a “class” of berth assigned, such as “in-town”, “cruise-dedicated”, “passenger terminal” or “cargo/commercial pier”. “Anchorage” may or may not be included in the list of possible “berths”, depending on port characteristics.

6. Cargo/commercial ports that are unable to fully confirm in advance the availability of cargo/commercial piers can opt for a system that provides a priority level (“priority 1, priority 2, etc.”) to each cruise ship on a given day, in accordance with pre-established, publicly-disseminated priority policies established by the port. This system will alert cruise line itinerary planners of potential conflicts on dates with proposed high traffic volumes. The granting of a priority level does not constitute a confirmation of berth availability.

7. In case a cruise line objects to a class of berth assigned, such objection must be received by the port authority/terminal operator no later than the first week of January 2018. The port authority/terminal operator shall provide alternative dates for alternative classes of berths, or a “priority statement”, no later than the second week of January 2018. A priority statement would grant the affected cruise line an order of priority for reassignment to a preferred type of berth if such type of berth is ultimately available on the date in question. Affected cruise lines shall have priority for the alternative dates offered until January 31st, 2018.

8. Call requests received after November 30th, 2017 will not be confirmed until the first week of February 2018, after preference is given to call requests received by the deadlines, including changed call dates pursuant to points 4 and 7. For call requests received after the deadlines, the berth assignment procedure will be on a first-come first-served basis.

9. Upon the provision of cruise call confirmations by the port, the cruise lines have one month to cancel the cruise call or to request a change to the date of the cruise call with no penalty. MedCruise supports its members’ needs to establish cancellation policies, which may include penalties or fees for cancellations or changes made by the cruise lines after one month from the date of cruise call confirmation. However, cancellations or changes resulting from severe weather, acts of God, or force majeure shall not be penalised.

MedCruise encourages agreements between ports within a given region to establish common policies and guidelines on cancellations.

10. To ensure fairness, transparency and good business practices, the ports of MedCruise will not tolerate or accept the practice of an individual cruise line making call requests simultaneously to two or more ports for the same ship for the same date.

MedCruise expects to continue to issue this same good practice policy for upcoming years and will discuss improvements to the Unified Mediterranean Berth Booking Process with cruise line executives and its member ports at upcoming MedCruise General Assembly workshops.