

Destination MEDCRUISE

Celebrating 10 Years 1996–2006

QUARTERLY JUNE 2006

ISSUE 12

Via Koper

MedCruise welcomes Koper, Lattakia and Rijeka as new members



Historic town centre of nearby city of Piran

The port city of Koper lies in southwest Slovenia on the Adriatic coast, just 20km south of Trieste, Italy and about 30km north of the Croatian border. Besides Koper, there are three important towns along the Slovenian coast, Izola, Piran (above) and Portorož.

Koper, with its historic town centre on a former island and a vast hinterland, is one of the most picturesque and attractive areas in the northern part of the Istrian peninsula. With respect to its area and number of inhabitants, the Municipality of Koper is one of the largest in the wider Primorska region. When taking into account the extent of Koper's economic development, its transportation infrastructure and its lively cultural life, this port area is among the most developed regions of Slovenia. The population of Koper is mainly Slovenian but there is also an active Italian minority. Due to the official bilingual policy in the area, the Italian language and all other cultural values of the Italian national minority are preserved on an equal basis.

Slovenia offers a patchwork of landscapes: high mountains with a lake district, wooded uplands, verdant green valleys, the mysterious

karst topography, and a slice of the Adriatic sea. Some of the most interesting shore excursions available from the Koper's port includes visits to the Slovenian coast, the famous Lipica stud farms, the awe-inspiring Posotjona and Skocjan caves, the



Koper's main square, located just 300 metres from the port



MedCruise president Laurent Monsaingeon, Aldo Babic, Matjaz Francé, of port of Koper and Albert Poggio MedCruise svp



Via Lattakia

Syrian gateway



Albert Poggio MedCruise svp next to Suleiman Balouch, director of Lattakia port and MedCruise president Laurent Monsaingeon

Lattakia is Syria's main seaport on the Mediterranean. It lies 186km southwest of Aleppo, and 348km north of Damascus. It has retained its importance since ancient times. Lattakia was one of the cities built by Salugos Nikator in the 2nd century BC. He named the port after his mother, Laudetia.

Lattakia, an ancient port city, has been built and rebuilt over the centuries.

Not many ancient remains have survived in Lattakia, but there are four columns and the Triumphal Arch arch from the Roman times of Septimus Severus (Circa – 200AD), in addition to a beautiful Ottoman construction called Khan Al-Dukhan, which is now a museum.

Lattakia is a perfect base for excursions throughout Syria's coastal regions where beaches, mountains, lush countryside, archaeological sites and traces of the Crusaders all lie within a short distance.

In the city itself there is a pleasant walk along the corniche and the adjacent colourfully

planted avenues; it is tempting to linger longer in the magnificent public gardens, right by the sea, with their fine palm trees and clumps of oleanders.

Lattakia has the best beaches in Syria and to harness this, two or three luxury resorts are situated a few miles north of the city. Also built

on the coast is the great sports complex built for the Mediterranean games that were held here in 1988.

The ancient excavation site of Ugarit and Saladin's castle are not far away, and Lattakia is often used as a base for visiting these sites.

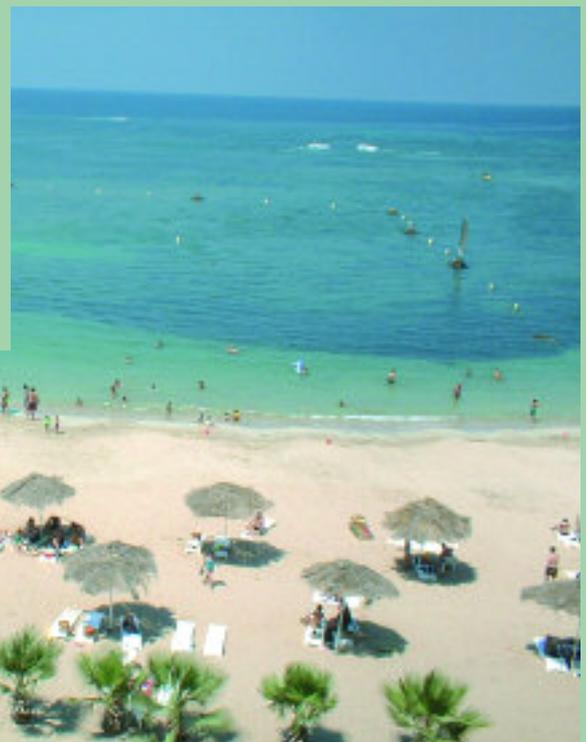
Lattakia's history goes back a long way. In the 2nd Millennium BC Lattakia was part of the Kingdom of Ugarit. Ugarit, a Syro-Phoenician kingdom, is being excavated at the moment about 20km north of Lattakia. It then fell to the Assyrians, and then the Persians.



The Triumphal Arch



The Citadel, Aleppo



Lattakia beach



Busy Adriatic resort

The Kvarner Riviera is located next to Istria and is centered on the main Croatian port of Rijeka, the busiest port on the Adriatic. The most famous resort in the area is Opatija, with Lovran, Crikvenica, Kraljevica and Novi Vinodolski also popular. The geographical position of Rijeka is crucial for its tourist image. The arrival to Rijeka is extremely attractive – both from the west and from the east – and the access from the sea offers the most charming view of the city. The area around Rijeka is the most developed tourist region in Croatia, with a tradition dating back to the 19th century. Trsat, one area of the city has a castle and several historic churches and is the centre of Marianism in this part of Croatia (10th of May, the Day of Our Lady of Trsat and the Seafarer's Day, the Assumption on the 15th of August, and the Nativity of the Virgin Mary on the 8th of August) which makes Rijeka a centre of religious tourism as well.

Apart from quality accommodation facilities, shops, theatres and other entertainment, visitors can attend important cultural events: the Biennial of Young Artists –



international exhibition of young artists – painters, sculptors, alternative artists (1st of July – 30th of September), the Rijeka Summer, concerts and theatrical performances in the Old Town, on Trsat, in the cathedral of St. Vitus (in June and July), the Melodies of Istria and Kvarner (end of June), the Assumption – Trsat (15th of August), the Days of Zajc (in November), the Day of St. Vitus, the patron saint of Rijeka (15th of June), the Rijeka Carnival, the biggest carnival event in Croatia (in February), etc.

Rijeka has had a very eventful past and has been ruled by many different

countries and empires over the years. In the middle ages it was part of the Croatian Kingdom, and then part of the Habsburg Empire. In the late 19th century, the first railway track was built in Croatia connecting Rijeka, through Zagreb, to Budapest and thus the importance of Rijeka grew even further. For these reasons, various industries were based in the city, including a huge shipbuilding yard.



Via Ceuta



Entryway to the Mediterranean on the African Coast and one of the Pillars of Hercules

Ceuta is a Spanish city on the northern tip of the African coast and is the meeting point of two continents, two seas and four cultures – Christian, Muslim, Jewish and Hindu.

Ceuta is divided into two distinct zones adjacent to one another. To the east, around and near its main peninsula, practically all inhabitants are Spanish and everything feels Spanish, but as soon as you head west, closer to the border with Morocco, you will begin to see the minarets of mosques and the atmosphere changes to predominantly Moroccan.

The Maritime Park in Ceuta is a wonderful place for sport and leisure, is situated close to the sea and covers 70,000sq mtr. It is a combination of swimming pools, lakes, waterfalls and gardens.

Other Sights in Ceuta include the remains of the fourteenth century Arab walls and fortress, and in the outskirts of the city the Arab aqueduct Arcos Quebrados still stands. Ceuta's cathedral is built on the site of a sixth-century Christian

temple and although neoclassic in appearance, its construction dates back to the fifteenth century. The cathedral features a lovely Renaissance portal of black marble and a baroque altar. In the elegant Municipal Palace, the Throne Room displays the standard of the city and many archeological remains.

Ceuta has a new cruise terminal in operation, which can accommodate vessels surpassing 220 metres in length with a capacity for up to 2,000 passengers. The terminal is situated just 100 metres from the city centre. Last year, 13 ships called at the port bringing 3,500 passengers.



Ceuta's Maritime Park



Meeting point of two continents

Winner of the MedCruise Gibraltar-Ceuta Getaway Contest

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines' Tours manager **Tim Moore** (pictured) is the winner of the MedCruise competition run in the March issues of MedCruise News and Destination MedCruise.

The prize was sponsored by the Gibraltar Tourist Board and the Ceuta Port Authority. The trip for two includes air travel to and from Gibraltar, two nights bed and breakfast accommodation in one of Gibraltar's leading hotels and an executive Rock tour, which will take him and his companion around the Rock and to its many sights, plus two additional nights in Ceuta as special guests of the Ceuta Port Authority.



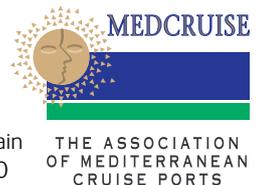
MedCruise Members

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

Contacts

MedCruise

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



MedCruise News

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



Published by Seatrade Communications Ltd