

## Via Portuguese ports

# Portugal – host of the 2004 European Football Championships



**T**he staging of the 2004 UEFA European Football Championships (EURO 2004) has provided Portugal with some of the most modern sporting venues in the world. In addition, the construction of road infrastructures to access the stadia and the nine host cities has now been completed.

EURO 2004 will take place between June 12 and July 4, and will make Portugal the focus of the world's attention, with about 9bn people watching the event on television. The country is preparing to welcome around 500,000 tourists who will be on holiday and hoping at the same time to support their own national team.

Lisbon mixes tradition with the modernity,

offering the visitor entertainment twenty four hours a day. The Euro 2004 final will be played at the new Luz Stadium on July 4, owned by Sport Lisboa e Benfica. It has been built next to the original football pitch and great care has been taken to retain the style of the original ground, known to Sport Lisboa e Benfica fans as the 'cathedral'.

Lisbon will receive Oceana, Caronia, Bremen and Wind Surf during the EURO finals but the only call co-inciding with a live match is the German cruiseship Bremen (ironically the match is between France and England!).

Lisbon (below) has three cruise terminals and is expecting around 270 calls this year, slightly up on 2003 figures.

Nearby the new José Alvalade Stadium incorporates a multifunctional space served by restaurants, bars, several cinemas and bowling alleys as well as a health clinic and a gymnasium. This stadium, owned by the Sporting Clube de Portugal has a roof that is



supported by four giant masts, reminiscent of the Portuguese ships that sailed the oceans during the age of the great Discoveries.

In the far south of Portugal, the Algarve welcomes Euro 2004 fans to Faro/Loulé where this famous tourist region offers the ideal relaxing holiday.

The Algarve Stadium (pictured) is a new symbolic architectural landmark. The spiralling ramps leading to the fourth floor and the external view of the stadium which looks like a huge tent-style pavilion, are what make this futuristic design so different.

Closeby is Portimao (above), the cruise port for the Algarve, offering a 330mtr long berth. It received 27 cruiseships and 10,000 passengers last year. This year's target is 30 with the Deutschland being the biggest ship to tie alongside. It is intending to increase the berth length to 500mtr.





## Via Almeria-Motril



PHOTO: WWW.GREATBUILDINGS.COM

## Imposing Alhambra

**O**ne of the most popular tours taken by cruise passengers visiting the Andalusian ports of Almeria and Motril, in the south east of Spain, is the Alhambra Palace in Granada.

Just over an hours drive away, located on a hill overlooking Granada, Alhambra is a sprawling palace-citadel featuring royal residential quarters, court complexes, official chambers, a bath and mosque which was begun in the 13th century by Ibn al-Ahmar, founder of the Nasrid dynasty although a fortress existed there since the 9th century. The Alhambra became a Christian court in 1492 when the Catholic monarchs, Ferdinand

and Isabel, conquered the city of Granada.

The name Alhambra comes from Arabic which means red or crimson castle. Created for military purposes the Alhambra was an alcazaba (fortress), an alcazar (palace) and a small medina, all in one. It is noted for its series of courtyards surrounded by rooms featuring Moorish arches, columns and domes.

Last year 88 cruise calls brought 25,417 passengers to the ports including the largest ship to call to date: Holland America Lines' 295mtr long Oosterdam.

In 2004, HAL's Westerdam is scheduled to call as well as MyTravel's Carousel, which will be making her maiden call to Almeria.

## Via Tarragona

## A Roman treasure



**T**he most popular tour for cruise passengers is a visit to the city of Tarragona which was named World Heritage by UNESCO in 2000, owing to the importance of its Roman remains.

The city has been known as Imperial Terraco since Roman times and it houses some of the best preserved Roman ruins in the Iberian Peninsula.

Many of the buildings had a military use

but when the city became the capital of the Tarraconense province it became a political and administrative centre.

During the Roman Empire the city was divided in two: the administrative centre was located around the hill (where the cathedral now sits) and the old district, whilst in the lower part located by the sea, was the Amphitheater most likely constructed in the first or second century.

La Rambla Nova is the city's main

street. 45mtr wide and 700mtr long it connects the old district with the harbour.

In the Old City is the cathedral of Tarragona which is built over an ancient Roman temple and some remains of one of the biggest Roman Circuses in the Empire – at almost 360mtr long – although few parts of it are there today.

This year Tarragona port is expecting to more than double its cruise calls to around a dozen ships bringing 5,000 passengers.



## Via Ceuta

## Multi-cultural delights

**C**euta offers the visitor endless possibilities, each more tempting than the previous one. Ceuta is an important commercial centre where electronic and photographic equipment, jewellery and crafts can be found at duty free prices. It is an historical and multi-cultural city.

Ceuta is also a good base from which to visit the surrounding Magreb towns in Morocco with the European service and experience of specialised travel agencies. Tangier, for example, is one hour by bus.

In Ceuta there is a lot to discover. The Parque Marítimo del Mediterráneo leisure complex, is close to the beautiful Port Deportivo, with its lakes, waterfalls and magnificent gardens, you can take a dip or walk and relax. Ceuta's coast is rich and has hundreds of marine species which offer varied gastronomic delights.

One can enjoy magnificent panoramic views of the Gibraltar Straits from the city's museum balconies or walk through the Plaza



de Africa with its Cathedral, the Shrine of de Santa María de Africa and Palacio de la Asamblea of Ceuta Autonomous City.

Ceuta is expecting 25 cruise ship calls in

2004 bringing around 7,000 passengers. The harbour has two cruise terminals: Muelle España and Muelle Poniente, the former only 100mtr from the centre of town.

## Via Portoferraio

## Classical Portoferraio



**V**isitors to Portoferraio, the port of Elba Island, often take the Classic tour which lasts three and a half hours and includes the following places of interest: Portoferraio - Marina di Campo - Porto Azzurro: magnificent beaches of Biodola and Procchio, Lacona, Laconella and Golfo Stella, fishermen's harbours, and Punta delle Grotte (ruins of a Roman Villa).

Two new half day tours are proving to be very appealing: Passengers can board a basket which will go to the top of Mount Capanne, inside 20 minutes. At 1,019mtr high it is the highest mountain of Elba. From the top you can view the islands of the Tuscan Archipelago, then onto Marciana Marina for perfume and wine tasting.

The other tour takes you on a journey through the days when mining was important in Elba, beginning first with the Etruscans, then the Greeks in Rio Marina (Mining museum and mining grounds).

Portoferraio which had about 74 calls bringing 23,000 plus passengers last year is expecting the same for 2004. It is also planning to build a new passenger terminal at a cost of €1.5m and the principal cruise quay will be lengthened by some 35mtr to allow larger ships to berth.



## Via Livorno

**T**he most popular tours from Livorno are the cities of Pisa (20 minutes away) and Florence (1 hour).

By far the most famous landmark in Pisa – the Leaning Tower – is located in Cathedral Square, along with the Baptistery and Monumental Churchyard. The imposing magnificence of the marbled buildings set against the green of the lawn around which the magnificent works of sculpture and architecture are located, cannot fail to evoke emotion in any visitor.

The Tower of Pisa is the bell tower of the



## Marbled magnificence

Cathedral. Its construction began in 1173 and continued for about two hundred years. It was originally believed that the inclination of the Tower was intentional by the architects but the Tower was designed to be vertical and started to incline during its



PHOTO: WWW.GREATBUILDINGS.COM

construction.

Efforts were made throughout the process to halt the inclination and even today, interventions are

being carried out within the sub-soil in order to reduce the inclination.

This year the port is expecting the number of cruise calls to rise by over 70 ships to 394 bringing in over 400,000 passengers. A three time caller will be Cunard's Queen Mary 2 on her inaugural season.

## Via Trieste

# Cultural crossroads



**T**rieste has always been a cross road between central European and Mediterranean cultures.

**This city trapped between the rocks and the sea was already an important centre for trade and travel before Rome was founded and became a centre of vital importance for the economy of the Hapsburg empire at**

**the time of its full splendour.**

The most popular tour with cruise passengers is the 'Castle of Miramare and Trieste Tour'.

Starting from the historical centre of the city, you will be guided through the history of Piazza Unità d'Italia – surrounded by splendid 1800's buildings – Molo Audace, the Verdi theatre, Palazzo

della Borsa, the church of San Nicolò, Borgo Teresiano and the Castle of San Giusto – a 15th century fortification with bastions and ramparts – from there you will enjoy a breathtaking panorama of the entire city.

Leaving the city centre along the coast, you will come upon the enchanting historical residence of Maximilian of Hapsburg and his wife Carlotta. An exotic park surrounds the castle.

In 2003, Trieste received

17 cruise ships with 13,464 passengers. This summer the Italian Adriatic port is expecting this number to increase to 19 ships.

The port is currently enlarging the Maritime Station in order to obtain a new berth suitable for bigger vessels. The renovation includes connecting the existing building with warehouse 42, creating a single totally renovated structure.



## Via Palermo

# Tracing Sicilian history



Palermo has nine quays with a total length of 2,790mtr with an 8–14mtr quay depth and a modern cruise terminal with air-conditioned halls. Last year 176 cruiseship calls brought 207,000 passengers outscoring its previous record of 197,434 in 2002 (+4.7%), thus breaking for the first time the 200,000 threshold and a similar number is expected this summer season.

To support the cruise trade boom Palermo Port Authority has completed some huge investments aimed at upgrading the cruise terminal Stazione Marittima at Veneto Quay (pictured). It has an automated system to handle baggage with a conveyor belt that dramatically enhances performances in embarkation/ disembarkation operations.

**T**he most popular tours from the port are Palermo and Monreale sightseeing. In Palermo, capital of Sicily there are traces of history from the Phoenicians through the Spanish domination to Liberty style. City tours cover the Arab to Norman Itinerary (11th to 12th Century which is just 10 minutes away walking or by bus); Gothic to Renaissance Itinerary, a Baroque itinerary, a 19th Century

Art Nouveau itinerary on foot or five minutes by bus and a Villa tour. Mount Etna, the highest active volcano in Europe and Taormina situated on the top of Mount Tauro with its Roman Theatre are reachable on a full day tour from Palermo.



## Via Limassol/Larnaca

# Cypriot hospitality abounds

**F**or cruise passengers arriving in Cyprus as a port of call destination those visiting Larnaca mostly take a tour to Ayia Napa whilst those choosing Limassol port take a tour to Paphos.

Ayia Napa is situated just south of Famagousta and has lovely golden beaches, clear sea waters, wonderful dreamy nights and warm-hearted inhabitants. Before it developed into a cosmopolitan tourist centre, Ayia Napa was a purely agricultural village.

Any visitor to Ayia Napa feels a sense of belonging in this welcoming environment. Cypriot hospitality is an accepted part of everyday life.

Paphos has been inhabited since the Neolithic period. Aphrodite's legendary birthplace was on this island, where her temple was erected by the Myceneans in the 12th century BC. The remains of villas, palaces, theatres, fortresses and tombs makes this a site of exceptional architectural and historic value.

The mosaics of Nea Paphos are among the most beautiful in the world.

Cyprus Ports Authority is expecting 116 calls from transiting cruise ships during 2004. Additionally six cruise ships will be visiting the port, three times a week, for a two-day cruise to nearby destinations with local passengers. The most popular destination from Limassol port is Haifa in Israel, although presently this tour is not taken because of the unstable political situation. However, the Lattakia-Syria and Beirut-Lebanon itineraries will both operate this summer. The next most popular destination is Port Said in Egypt.



Via Gibraltar

# Of Dolphins and Apes



**D**olphin Tours in the Bay of Gibraltar are probably the best and well received tours from cruise visitors. However, in numerical terms, the round the Rock tour which

**covers the Upper Rock, Apes, St Michael's Cave is the standard and still most popular tour.**

Tours of the Gibraltar Botanical Gardens are becoming increasingly popular

as visitors see they are as good (if not better) than any other comparable gardens in this area.

Gibraltar received 167 calls last year bringing 143,508 passengers. In 2004 Gibraltar is expecting 206 cruise calls booked through to year-end. This represents an increase of 41 ships and includes four calls by Cunard flagship Queen Mary 2 in her inaugural season.

Other ships call at Gibraltar for the first time this year include Oceania's Nautica, Saga Shipping's Saga Pearl, Celebrity Cruises Galaxy, HAL's Westerdam, Swan Hellenic's Minerva II and Princess Cruises' Star Princess. The largest by far is QM2 for which the port is specially dredging the Western Arm berth to be able to accommodate her.

Gibraltar Port Authority's chief executive Tony Davis says, 'We are planning to expand our existing terminal facilities – but a date of completion has not yet been set.'

Via Valletta

# Temple builders



**T**he single most popular tour taken by cruise passengers from Valletta is the excursion to visit the Megalithic temples of Malta.

Between around 5,500 and 4,500 years ago, the Maltese Islands were inhabited by an

extraordinary society, one both intelligent and resourceful. The Islands witnessed a unique, megalithic, building phenomenon.

The lives and beliefs of these early Maltese Islanders are shrouded in mystery. But they left an indication of their lifestyle and

their level of sophistication through an impressive number of elaborate structures which are still standing today.

The temples in Ggantija, Gozo, are considered the oldest, surviving, free-standing monuments in the world. They predate the Great Pyramid of Cheops in Egypt and Stonehenge in southern Britain by around 1,000 years. The Hal Saflieni Hypogeum in Paola, an outstanding feat of prehistoric engineering, is a labyrinth of passageways and chambers dug out of the rock. It is the only underground temple and burial place of its kind in the world.

Other temples, those of Hagar Qim, Mnajdra and Tarxien, as well as a dozen other sites seem to confirm the theory that Malta was a 'Sacred Island' – a kind of centre of worship and mystic practices for prehistoric communities in the region.

The temple culture came to a mysterious end by around 2500 BC and replaced by peoples from various parts of the Mediterranean during the Bronze Age.

During 2003 Valletta had 384,805

cruise passengers and 416 cruise calls.

So far 300 cruiseship visits are confirmed for 2004 including calls from Star Princess, Caronia and Prinsendam. This year Valletta is refurbishing its passenger terminal to cater for turnaround calls.



## Via Volos

## Neolithic treasures



**T**he two best known Neolithic sites in Greece - Sesklo and Dimini - are located close to Volos port.

At Sesklo the first inhabitants, who were farmers and stock-raisers, founded a small settlement around 6500 BC. The settlement was inhabited until about 1500 BC.

The buildings at Sesklo had stone foundations and a superstructure crowned by a gable of hip roof made of a thick clay on a timber frame. Most of them were one-room measuring between 10 to 50sq mtr.

One of the best preserved vases from Sesklo is on show at the Museum

of Volos. Its height is 35cm and is dated between 5300-3800 BC. It is decorated with plain long white lines on the dark red surface.

The main feature of Dimini are the six concentric circular enclosures. Initially it was thought that represented defensive walls but recent re-examination points to better organisation of the land.

Dimini was established some time after 5000 BC and its buildings are within the concentric circles mentioned above. The most beautiful example of Greek Neolithic pottery is a two-handled vase from Dimini dated between 5300 and 4800 BC.

Volos port is investing in new passenger terminal facilities which are expected to be ready for use this summer when the city welcomes participants in the Olympic Games.



## Via Split

## 1,700 years of tradition



**U**ndoubtedly, the most interesting tour taken by passengers calling at the Croatian port of Split is the City Tour. The town of Split was founded in the late third century when the Roman emperor Diocletian built his

**palace there, leaving a heritage of breathtaking architecture.**

Split has 1,700 years tradition as a town. The city centre is situated within the walls of the world known Diocletian's Palace - the only imperial palace from the Roman times in which

residents dwell. The Palace is proclaimed as a part of the UNESCO world cultural heritage. The port of Split is situated in the immediate vicinity of the old town centre settled inside the Diocletian's palace and the streets are free of traffic allowing you to walk through history. Within the 30,000sq mtr palace there are many ancient temples, Middle-Age mansions, sacred buildings, squares, museums, galleries as well as shops - something for every cruise passenger.

In 2003, 140 cruise ships called and this year Split is expecting more than 200 to visit. This represents significant growth over the last four years when just two ships called in 2000, rising to 37 in 2001 and 2002.

The largest ship to berth in the port so far is Seven Seas Voyager on its inaugural voyage whilst Costa Classica berthed in front of the city.

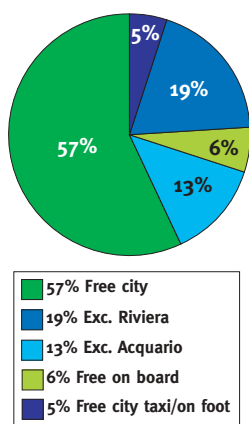
Construction has begun on the so called 'summer berths' alongside the main breakwater which will be operational in July 2005. This investment will allow even the biggest cruiseships to berth as it will provide an operational quay of 400mtr with depths ranging from 11 to 14mtr alongside.

## Genoa

The Cruise Genoa and Portofino consortium, a joint venture of 20 public and private entities, has been actively promoting tourism since 1998 - not just the city and port of Genoa but the whole provincial territory, including the port of Portofino, besides promoting the Ligurian coasts and the hinterland.

A reception programme conceived by Cruise Genoa provides a free boat or bus service from the port to the city-centre. Cruise Genoa hostesses on the berths and in the city, distribution of brochures and city maps to passengers and special agreements with shops and restaurants.

**1. Composition of passengers transiting in the port of Genoa in 2002**  
(based on 119,827 pax)



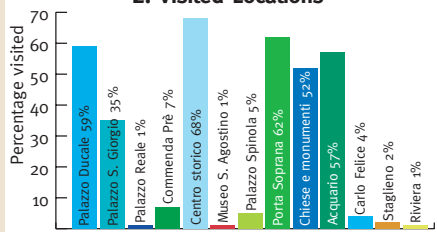
This idea was conceived when analysis showed that the city's income derived from cruise passengers was mainly linked to the tours directly sold on board. In 1998, 50% of passengers transiting Genoa remained on board. Since the reception programme was introduced the number of passengers visiting the city and the Riviera has steadily grown each year and reached 94% in 2003 (see 1).

In addition Cruise Genoa decided to analyse the behaviour of passengers transiting and pre-embarking in Genoa. In collaboration with IIC (International Institute of the Communications), Cruise Genoa ask passengers before coming back on board a series of questions. The basic aim of this study was to point out the attractions offered by the town and to understand if

they met expectations (see 2).

This analysis shows – for example – some destinations, even though little known and visited, received a high level of satisfaction from the visitors. It has also revealed that 100% of the interviewees would return to Genoa and would recommend a visit to the city.

**2. Visited Locations**



## Web watch

MedCruise has launched a newly revamped image for its web site. In fact, the site has undergone a total makeover in content, layout and structure so that its usability has been enhanced and is now more attractive.

The new website at [www.medcruise.com](http://www.medcruise.com) goes to further strengthen the relationship between the cruise industry and Mediterranean cruise destinations, members of MedCruise. The new website offers various sections ranging from activities related to the association and an extensive database of Member ports' facilities. Other sections include information about cruising in the Mediterranean, cruise operators in the region, as well as generic information about the set-up of the Association. Visitors can also subscribe to MedCruise newsletters, which are sent electronically every quarter.

Meanwhile the Mediterranean features on the latest chapter in Princess Cruises' comprehensive online destination series – Destination: Europe. This offers information about Princess' cruise and cruisetour itineraries, plus a look at the European

experience and what to do in each of more than 80 ports of call.

With so much history and culture to absorb the Mediterranean is very popular with discriminating travellers says Princess Cruises on the website found at [www.princess.com](http://www.princess.com).



Mediterranean ports featured on the site which are also MedCruise members include Piraeus(Athens), Barcelona, Monaco(Monte Carlo), Dubrovnik, Lisbon, Valletta (Malta) Messina, Naples, Kusadasi (Ephesus), Gibraltar and Venice.

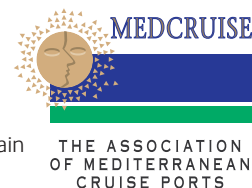
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