

2016

Set Sale

Our 2016 cruise calendar has all the highlights to keep your clients booking this year. Jane Archer reports

With celebrity chefs, highland games, safaris and expeditions in Norway among 2016's cruise highlights, agents should be looking beyond the traditional sailing fraternity when seeking to hike sales of holidays at sea.

It's not just next year's itineraries that will excite holidaymakers. Seven new ships, listed here, offer everything from water slides to an Imax cinema, a snow grotto, and even a venue where they can make wine.

Add in around 25 new river cruise vessels – too many to list but look out for craft from Viking River Cruises, AmaWaterways, Avalon Waterways, CroisiEurope,

Amadeus River Cruises, Emerald Waterways and Scenic, which is making its Asia debut – and you can see why the industry is so optimistic about 2016.

That optimism is reflected in the trade, with Clia UK & Ireland's 10th anniversary cruise convention in Southampton on May 18-20 selling out in weeks. Those attending will enjoy a peek at Royal Caribbean International's new *Harmony of the Seas* and get reacquainted with P&O Cruises' *Ventura*.

If you missed out on tickets, there will be more Clia events, including a luxury expo in Southampton on August 14-15 on Regent Seven Seas Cruises'

Seven Seas Voyager and Oceania Cruises' *Marina*.

All prices that follow are per person cruise-only unless stated.

► JANUARY

WHAT'S NEW? The public areas of Hurtigruten's ship *Polarlys* are being refurbished during a 22-day drydock that started this week. Its new Scandinavian look is designed to reflect the coastal landscapes of the Arctic.

How much? From £1,352 for a 12-day Classic Round Voyage from Bergen to Kirkenes and back, departing February 13.

► FEBRUARY

WHAT'S NEW? Tauck has a

two-day training academy at The Langham hotel in London from February 8-10 for up to 50 luxury agents. The event will be repeated on August 22-24.

How much? Both events are free and include two nights at The Langham and meals. Agents have to pay their own travel costs.

► MARCH

WHAT'S NEW? Viking River Cruises' new *Viking Osfrid* starts sailing eight-day voyages on the Douro in Portugal on March 27. The vessel carries 106 passengers and sails round-trip from Porto.

How much? From £3,645 for 10 days (two nights in Lisbon, seven on the cruise) departing



➔ March 27, including flights.
WHAT'S NEW? *Celebrity Summit* returns to service after a two-week makeover that will add a rooftop terrace, upgrade its suites and turn its Normandie restaurant into a Tuscan Grille steakhouse.
How much? From £479 for a seven-night Southern Caribbean cruise round-trip from San Juan, departing March 19.

► APRIL

WHAT'S NEW? Holland America Line's new *Koningsdam* launches in the Mediterranean before relocating to northern Europe for the summer. New venues include a Dutch Cafe and Blend, where passengers can make wine.
How much? From £798 for a seven-night maiden voyage round-trip from Civitavecchia, departing April 8.
WHAT'S NEW? Viking River Cruises' second ocean ship, *Viking Sea*, sets sail on April 3, with two speciality restaurants, a Snow Grotto and Norwegian-style deli.

How much? From £2,449 for a 10-day Empires of the Mediterranean cruise from Venice to Istanbul, departing April 3, including flights.

WHAT'S NEW? Royal Caribbean International's new *Ovation of the Seas* is sailing five and seven-night cruises round-trip from Southampton before sailing to Europe and then on to its new home in China.

How much? From £499 for a five-night France and Belgium cruise, departing April 17.

WHAT'S NEW? *Sirena*, the former Princess Cruises ship acquired by Oceania Cruises, will be christened in Barcelona on April 27 following a refit that will add new restaurants Tuscan Steak and Red Ginger.

How much? From £3,829 including flights for a 14-day inaugural voyage from Barcelona to Venice, departing April 27.

► MAY

WHAT'S NEW? Carnival Cruise Line is back in the Mediterranean



ABOVE: Red Ginger restaurant, Oceania Cruises



Carnival Vista has the first Imax at sea and 'bikes' suspended from an 800ft track

after a three-year break with new ship *Carnival Vista*. It has the first Imax cinema at sea and 'pedal bikes' suspended from an 800-foot track.

How much? From £905 for a 13-day maiden voyage from Trieste to Barcelona, departing May 1.

WHAT'S NEW? European Waterways' new eight-passenger barge, *Finesse*, launches on May 1. It is cruising the River Saône and Canal du Centre in France between Saint-Jean-de-Losne and Montchanin.

How much? From £4,550 for six nights, departing May 1.

WHAT'S NEW? Hurtigruten is launching new expedition-style cruises in Norway on the 320-passenger *Spitsbergen*. It will stay longer in selected ports and carry an expedition team to lecture about wildlife, nature and history.

How much? From £968 for a seven-night Classic Voyage North from Bergen to Kirkenes, departing May 8.

WHAT'S NEW? Royal Caribbean International's *Harmony of the Seas* is sailing two mini-cruises

from Southampton to France and Holland. The ship holds more than 6,600 passengers when full and has water slides, a bionic bar and super-fast internet.

How much? From £429 for a four-night cruise to Rotterdam, departing May 22.

► JUNE

WHAT'S NEW? Agents will have their first chance to see Voyages to Antiquity's *Aegean Odyssey* when it visits Falmouth, Dartmouth and Dover at the end of a voyage from Seville to the UK.

How much? From £2,395 for a 15-day cruise from Seville to Dover, departing June 11, including one-way flight.

WHAT'S NEW? Tauck's river boat *Joy* makes its debut on the Danube, sailing nine-night voyages between Regensburg and Budapest, packaged with two nights in Prague. Tauck's new vessel *Grace* is due to launch a month earlier on the Rhine.

How much? From £3,445 for 12 days, departing October 27.

WHAT'S NEW? Cunard's *Queen Mary 2* emerges from a 25-day drydock on June 21 with 30 more Britannia Club balcony cabins, 15 single rooms and a new-look Kings Court buffet with a Chef's Table tasting menu.

How much? From £1,999 for an eight-night transatlantic crossing from Southampton to New York departing June 23, including one-way flight.



ABOVE LEFT: *Carnival Vista*

LEFT: Bionic bartenders, Royal Caribbean



► JULY

WHAT'S NEW? Regent Seven Seas Cruises' 750-passenger all-suite, all-balcony *Seven Seas Explorer* enters service. It has two speciality restaurants: Chartreuse for French cuisine and Pacific Rim for Asian dishes.

How much? From £8,789 for a 14-night voyage from Monte Carlo to Venice, departing July 20, including flights.

WHAT'S NEW? Crystal makes its debut in the river cruise sector with the 1987-built *Mozart* on July 13. The widest river cruise boat in Europe, it can sail only on the Danube, and has been totally refurbished to Crystal's luxury standards.

How much? From £3,205 for a 10-day cruise round-trip from Vienna, departing July 23, including flights.

WHAT'S NEW? *Mekong Pandaw* returns to service after a summer refit with two new large suites.



Mekong Pandaw returns to service in July with suites that will be the biggest in Pandaw's fleet

Measuring 360sq ft, these will be the biggest suites in Pandaw's fleet, and will have a private balcony and lounge, and benefits for guests will include free house wine with lunch and dinner. *Pandaw 2* will get upgraded suites from October.

How much? From \$1,755 for a seven-night voyage from Siem Reap in Cambodia to Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam, departing July 9. **WHAT'S NEW?** Gargoyle hunting in Strasbourg, an art class in



LEFT:
Herbie
Hancock

RIGHT:
Regent
Seven
Seas
Cruises



► AUGUST

WHAT'S NEW? Herbie Hancock is headlining on *Queen Mary 2*'s jazz-themed transatlantic voyage from Southampton to New York, departing August 1.

How much? From £1,699 for eight nights, including one-way return flight.

WHAT'S NEW? Saga Cruises has scheduled a maiden call at Holy

Miltenberg and a trip to an amusement park are among outings on a Uniworld River Cruises family holiday that combines a week on the Rhine with two nights in Prague.

How much? From £2,719 (children aged four to 18 pay 50%) for nine nights sailing from Basel to Nuremberg, departing July 24.

Loch in Scotland on a two-week round-Britain voyage in August so passengers can visit the Highland games in Dunoon.

How much? From £2,669 for a 14-night round-trip from Dover, departing August 18.

► SEPTEMBER

WHAT'S NEW? Scenic is making its debut in Myanmar with the

new river vessel *Scenic Aura*. It is sailing 11-night voyages between Pyay and Mandalay that are packaged with two nights in Yangon. A 20-day holiday adds three nights at Inle Lake.

How much? From £4,390 for a 16-day Yangon to Mandalay cruise-and-stay holiday departing October 6, including flights.

WHAT'S NEW? P&O Cruises is offering a "three in one" foodie holiday as celebrity chef James Martin, master pâtissier Eric Lanlard and cheese specialist Charlie Turnbull all join *Britannia* for a voyage around Iberia.

How much? From £799 for an eight-night cruise round-trip from Southampton, departing September 17.

WHAT'S NEW? Viking Ocean Cruises' *Viking Star* sets sail from Bergen on the first leg of a voyage to Puerto Rico for an inaugural winter season of Caribbean cruises from San Juan.

How much? From £5,639 for a 15-day voyage from Bergen to Montreal, departing September 18, including flights.

► OCTOBER

WHAT'S NEW? Regent Seven Seas Cruises is offering free and unlimited Wi-Fi for all passengers starting this month. Its 2016-17 winter collection also features 11 departures, with free three-night pre or post-cruise land tours.

How much? From £7,399 for a 24-night sailing from Lisbon to Cape Town, departing October 23, including flights and a three-night post-cruise safari.

► NOVEMBER

WHAT'S NEW? *MSC Armonia* arrives in Havana, from where it will sail seven-night voyages to Honduras, Belize, Mexico, the Cayman Islands and Jamaica. *MSC Opera* will offer the same cruise programme for its second Cuba

season, starting in December.

How much? From £1,219 for seven nights on *MSC Opera*, departing December 3, including flights.

► DECEMBER

WHAT'S NEW? Seabourn's new 600-passenger *Seabourn Encore* departs Piraeus for a maiden season in Asia. The ship has a restaurant devised by US chef Thomas Keller and an adult-only area with cabanas and hot tubs.

How much? From £5,299 for a 16-day voyage from Piraeus to Dubai, departing December 4.

WHAT'S NEW? Variety Cruises launches 10-day Costa Rica and Panama Canal voyages on the 34-passenger *Callisto*. The ship takes over the route from *Variety Voyager*, which will instead be offering cruises from Cuba.

How much? From €2,550 for a 10-night cruise between Puntarenas and Colon, departing December 30.

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