

SELLING TIPS



How to sell

Sea days

Days on the open ocean are packed with opportunities and won't leave your clients adrift with nothing to do, writes **Jeannine Williamson**

Try something new: Crafts, dancing, singing and bridge are just some of the activities to try on a sea day, when cruise directors go out of their way to make sure there's plenty to keep guests occupied. Best of all, most are free. Doug Glenwright, Fred Olsen Cruise Lines' guest experience director, said: "Guests can make the most of their time at sea with a programme that's varied, vibrant and thoughtfully curated. There's plenty to enjoy, from calm watercolour workshops in our purpose-built studio to spotting marine life alongside Orca's ocean conservationists and specialists from Ocean Wildlife Encounters."

Chill out: With no excursions or busy schedules, clients can indulge in a spa treatment, get a new hairdo or take time out by the pool. Yasmin McKechnie, Princess Cruises' sales director, UK & EMEA, recommends relaxing in The Sanctuary. "At a small additional cost, this adult-only retreat offers plush loungers, private cabanas, attentive service and tranquillity, providing the perfect place to unwind with uninterrupted ocean views," she says.

Enjoy the entertainment: Cruises offer world-class entertainment, with famous guests and West End-style shows included in the price. *Elton: A Celebration of Elton John* recently debuted on NCL ship *Norwegian Luna* (see review, page 55), while Royal Caribbean is the only line featuring thrilling high-diving

shows. Guests can stroll between venues on Holland America Line's Music Walk, watch daredevil parkour athletes on Celebrity Cruises ships or party in Virgin Voyages' nightclubs.

Linger over dinner: Sea days mean time to dress for dinner rather than rushing back from a day ashore, so lines that offer formal nights often put them on these days – warn clients to book early if they want hair-styling or a salon treatment – and some guests choose these evenings to splash out on speciality dining to savour the experience. Afternoon tea is another unhurried, elevated affair on lines such as Cunard, Fred Olsen, Viking, Princess and Marella Cruises. Iain Baillie, Cunard's associate vice-president UK and EMEA sales, said: "Our sea days are as much a destination as any port we visit. There is a real sense of occasion in our signature afternoon tea in the Queens Room."

Go to a talk: Cruise lines pride themselves on attracting top-notch speakers from the worlds of sport, entertainment, politics, history, food and more. Cunard's star-studded line-up includes actor and *The Celebrity Traitors* star Celia Imrie and conductor Anthony Inglis. Ambassador Cruise Line's list includes BBC football pundit Mark Lawrenson and broadcasters Jenny Powell and Kate Thornton, while Saga has celebrity chef Phil Vickery and radio presenter Ken Bruce.