

5 of the best... ports for 2026

Every year, a host of new port names pop up to keep itineraries fresh. Here are five to look out for in 2026, says **Jane Archer**



LYSEKIL, SWEDEN

With Russian city St Petersburg off limits due to the war in Ukraine, cruise lines have hunted around for alternative places in and around the Baltic. Lysekil is one of their finds – and quite a catch. On Sweden’s west coast, it sits by a fjord and is perfect for outdoorsy types, with nature reserves, hiking trails and cliff walks. Oceania Cruises, Regent Seven Seas Cruises and SeaDream Yacht Club will be there in 2026, with seal safaris, bike tours and boat trips to local fishing villages.

Book it: Oceania Cruises’ 10-day Baltic Sea Discovery cruise departs Copenhagen on July 10. From £2,669. oceaniacruises.com



NORFOLK, VIRGINIA

At the mouth of America’s Chesapeake Bay, Norfolk isn’t exactly new (American Cruise Lines is a regular visitor), but it is on the 2026 radar for Holland America Line and Princess Cruises as they set sail on cruises marking 250 years since the US declared independence from Great Britain. The town, founded by British settlers in 1682, is full of history. Excursions visit Jamestown, the first British settlement in the New World, and Colonial Williamsburg, the capital of Virginia from 1699-1780. **Book it:** Holland America Line’s seven-day America’s 250th Celebration: Stars & Stripes Voyage departs Boston on July 4. From £1,149. hollandamerica.com



CRUISE GUIDE 2026

BASTIA, CORSICA

On the French island of Corsica, Bastia is a rare find on cruise itineraries because most lines make a beeline for the capital, Ajaccio. Breaking tradition, both Fred Olsen Cruise Lines and Windstar Cruises will be there in 2026. Passengers will discover a charming port town with pastel-coloured houses and a 15th-century citadel (Bastia comes from the Genoese word *bastiglia*, meaning 'fortress') with small, car-free alleys to explore, a beautiful baroque cathedral and a market square where stopping for coffee and cake is a must. **Book it:** Fred Olsen's 11-night Amalfi Coast, Italian Riviera & Corsica cruise departs Alicante on October 8. From £1,899 including flights and full-board dining. fredolsencruises.com

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CEUTA, SPANISH MOROCCO

Most cruise lines sailing into the Mediterranean call in to Gibraltar, but in 2026, Seabourn, Ambassador Cruise Line and Fred Olsen will be heading to Ceuta, a Spanish exclave across the water on Morocco's north coast. How and why it's part of Spain is a long story; all passengers need to know to start with is that they'll be visiting a cultural wonderland with interesting architecture, a Roman basilica, fortifications built when the Portuguese were here, along with lively bazaars and markets selling North African spices.

Book it: Seabourn's nine-night Jewels of Andalusia & The Balearic Islands cruise departs Civitavecchia (Rome) on November 1. Veranda Suite from £6,198. seabourn.com



PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Norwegian Cruise Line hasn't got a world exclusive with its 2026 cruises from Philadelphia (American Cruise Lines also visits). However, it can claim to be the port's only international line because it is homeporting *Norwegian Jewel* and *Norwegian Pearl* here. Passengers will have to add pre or post-cruise stays to see the city, home of the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall, where the US Declaration of Independence was signed, and famed for its Philly cheesesteaks.

Book it: NCL's seven-night Bermuda cruises sail round-trip from Philadelphia between April and August. From £725. ncl.com