

of the
BEST

SMALL-SHIP CRUISES

Book ahead for a string of smart new ships set to launch in 2021 and 2022, writes **Laura French**



CRYSTAL ENDEAVOR: JAPAN

Crystal Cruises' first expedition yacht is set to launch next year with several impressive features – all-suite accommodation, butler service, fine dining and the only casino on an expedition yacht – plus plenty of space with capacity capped at 200. Itineraries span Europe, Canada and Latin America as well as the poles, while those after a cultural jaunt will find plenty to please on its Japan itineraries. Highlights include a 14-night sailing from Osaka to Otaru, taking in Mikimoto Pearl Island, Mount Fuji, Tokyo and Hokkaido before moving on to Russia.

Book it: From £11,222 cruise-only, departing May 29, 2021.
crystalcruises.co.uk

SEABOURN VENTURE: NORWAY

If the charms of Norway's fjord-studded landscapes aren't enough to tempt cruisers back to the seas, Seabourn's new ship surely will be. *Seabourn Venture* boasts spacious veranda suites, two submarines and interiors designed by Adam D Tihany. It's set to sail its inaugural itinerary from Greenwich to Tromsø in December 2021. Activities on the Norway cruises include dog-sledding, snowshoeing, kayaking, overnight winter camps and snorkelling with killer whales. From May 2022, polar bear sightings in Svalbard will be added to the mix.

Book it: Sailings will be available to book from mid-October; prices are yet to be released.
seabourn.com



EMERALD AZZURRA: RED SEA

Emerald Waterways is branching into the world of ocean adventures in 2021 with *Azzurra*, the first vessel in its new Emerald Yacht Cruises portfolio. The 100-passenger ship will feature three bars and restaurants, a wellness centre and infinity-style pool, and will sail in the Adriatic, Mediterranean and beyond. For a culture-rich voyage, suggest the Best of the Red Sea itinerary, which starts in Aqaba and takes in Hurghada, Safage, Sharm el-Sheikh and Eilat, with white-sand beaches and centuries-old bazaars along the way.

Book it: Early-bird fares start at £3,235 based on an Oceanview Stateroom, with four departures in January 2022.
emeraldyachtcruises.co.uk



SILVER DAWN: BARCELONA TO LISBON

Silversea Cruises' 10th ship is due to join the fleet next September with nine suite categories and eight dining options, including the Sea and Land Taste programme of cooking demos and immersive experiences. Sailings include South America itineraries and transatlantic crossings, but for those after a shorter hop, suggest the 10-day Barcelona to Lisbon voyage, which takes in Majorca, Valencia, Cartagena and Cadiz plus Casablanca and Tangier in Morocco.

Book it: From £4,590 including business-class flights and transfers on November 9, 2021.
silversea.com



LE COMMANDANT CHARCOT: ANTARCTICA

There's been a string of new polar ships in recent years, but for one of the most exciting, look to Ponant's hybrid electric-LNG vessel, due to start sailing next spring with 135 cabins and suites, a spa, two pools and impressive eco-credentials. Standout itineraries include a 25-day Ross Sea voyage that goes as close as it's possible to go to the South Pole, and an 11-night Weddell Sea & Larsen Ice Shelf trip that takes in one of the world's most impressive ice sheets, with hot-air balloon rides, snowmobiling and hovercraft trips among the adventures.

Book it: From £10,780 for the 11-night trip, including an overnight in Santiago, return Santiago-Ushuaia flights and transfers, with departures from December 2021 to March 2022.
uk.ponant.com



PICTURES: Ponant; Stirling Design International; Shutterstock