

LONDON, October 9, 2013 /PRNewswire/ --

First New Ship Will Set Sail on Destination-Focused Itineraries in 2015 / 2016

Viking Cruises announced the launch of its ocean product line, Viking Ocean Cruises (<http://www.vikingcruises.co.uk/oceans>) in the UK, marking the introduction of the travel industry's first new cruise line in nearly a decade.

Developed from the ground up to return the focus of cruising to the destination, Viking Ocean Cruises will begin sailing in May 2015 with its first vessel- *Viking Star*-embarking on maiden voyages in Scandinavia and the Baltic; and the Western and Eastern Mediterranean. Viking Cruises has aggressive expansion plans in both the ocean and river cruise categories. Anticipating high demand for the new product, a second ocean ship is on order for delivery in 2016 and conditional orders and options for four more additional ocean vessels also in place. The ocean ship order follows the company's continued rapid fleet expansion in the river cruise sector, with 10 new river ships recently christened in March of this year and 14 new river ships planned to launch in 2014.

"It is our view that in the race to build bigger ships, many cruise lines have lost sight of the destinations to which they sail," said Torstein Hagen, Chairman of Viking Cruises. "With our new ocean cruises, we are applying the same principles behind our award-winning river cruises

Viking's New Ocean Cruise Line Reinvents Destination Ocean Voyages

Written by Australian Business

to our itinerary and ship design; privileged-access excursions; and onboard experiences to make destinations the true focus."

As a direct result of extensive feedback and input from Viking River Cruises passengers, Viking Ocean Cruises was created. Itineraries were developed for maximum time in port, often with late evenings or overnights, so guests can experience local nightlife or evening performances. Ports include both cosmopolitan cities and "collector ports," and appeal to those with an interest in history, art and culture. In addition, all-inclusive pricing provides unparalleled value-with every cruise fare including a veranda stateroom, shore excursions in each port of call, all onboard meals, and all port charges and government taxes. Passengers also enjoy many complimentary amenities as part of their fare, including: beer and wine with lunch and dinner service; wi-fi; self-service laundry and 24-hour room service- with prices starting from £1,499pp.

Wendy Atkin-Smith, Managing Director Viking Cruises UK said; 'We are thrilled to launch Viking Ocean Cruises in the UK market. The state of the art design of our Viking Longships have revolutionised the river cruise experience and now, with the introduction of Viking Star, we intend to revolutionise ocean cruising. Our ship is smaller in size and smarter in design - an alternative to today's mega-liners.'

Viking Star

Classified by Cruise Critic as a "small ship," the new 930-passenger all-veranda *Viking Star* is engineered at a scale that allows direct access into most ports, so guests have easy and efficient embarkation and debarkation. The ship's understated elegance and modern Scandinavian design is crafted for maximum guest comfort. Highlighted features include:

- **All Veranda Staterooms:** Guests can choose from five stateroom categories, starting from a 270 sq. ft. veranda stateroom, all with private verandas, king-size beds, large showers, and LCD TVs.
- **Explorer Suites:** *Viking Star's* 14 Explorer Suites are two-room suites ranging from 757 to 1,448 sq. ft. and offer sweeping views from wrap-around private verandas as well as the most amenities and privileges of any category onboard
- **Two Pool Choices:** In addition to the Main Pool with a retractable dome permitting any-season swimming, *Viking Star* features one of the only infinity pools at sea, allowing passengers to swim surrounded by their destination in a glass-backed pool cantilevered off the stern
- **The Spa:** In keeping with Viking's Nordic heritage, The Spa onboard *Viking Star* is

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designed with the holistic wellness philosophy of Scandinavia in mind—from the centuries-old tradition of the sauna to a "snow grotto" where snowflakes gently descend from the ceiling through chilled air

- **Explorers' Lounge and Wintergarden:** Spaces designed to facilitate mingling and storytelling, the two-deck Explorers' Lounge at the bow of the ship is the perfect spot for taking in scenery through double-height windows over a glass of aquavit or pint of local craft beer; and the Wintergarden is a serene environment in which to relax and enjoy afternoon tea service complete with a curated tea selection

- **Dining Choices:** *Viking Star* offers multiple restaurant locations and food choices—from The Restaurant and the World Café, serving a variety of global cuisines and regional specialties—to intimate dining experiences at The Chef's Table, Italian Grill and The Kitchen Table, all serving meals prepared with fresh, local ingredients. Furthermore, with multiple choices for outdoor seating during meals, *Viking Star* offers more al fresco dining than any other ship

- **Enriching Entertainment:** Connecting passengers to their destinations through authentic experiences is central to Viking Cruises, and *Viking Star's* onboard venues include a dramatic three-deck atrium where passengers can enjoy musicians playing regional and classical music; the Star Theater, home of enrichment lectures from scholars and experts; an onboard cooking school where guests can learn local specialties; and the Viking Piano Lounge, where guests can relax, mingle, and exchange stories after a day of exploring

- **Sustainable Features:** Designed with the environment in mind, *Viking Star* features dual-fuel engines with 'clean' exhaust meeting the most stringent emission standards, a hydro-dynamically optimized streamlined hull and bow for maximum fuel efficiency, onboard solar panels, and equipment that minimizes exhaust pollution and meets the strictest environmental regulations

The ship has been designed by experienced nautical architects and engineers, including an interior design team of London-based SMC Design, and Los Angeles-based Rottet Studios. The first of two ocean ships on order, *Viking Star* will be built by Italy's Fincantieri shipyard.

NOTES TO EDITOR

2015 Maiden Voyage Itineraries

- ***Viking Homelands*** (15 days; Stockholm-St. Petersburg-Copenhagen-Bergen) -

This itinerary features a blend of northern continental European cities, imperial Russia and the legendary homeland of the Vikings. The journey includes overnights in Bergen, Stockholm and St. Petersburg, plus calls in Helsinki, Tallinn, Gdansk, Berlin (Warnemünde), Copenhagen, Aalborg, Stavanger, and Flam. Prices start from £2,999 per person

- ***Passage Through Western Europe*** (15 days; Bergen - London - Paris - Barcelona)

The nimble proportions of *Viking Star* give guests access to the heart of the Continent as well as coastal cities on this cross-region itinerary that journeys from the Viking waters of Bergen to London on the Thames, down the Atlantic Coast of France and Portugal, and to the Mediterranean. Ports include Lisbon, Cadiz, Gibraltar, and Cartagena with overnights in Bergen, London, Paris (Rouen) and Barcelona. Prices start from £3,299 per person

- ***Mediterranean Odyssey*** (13 days; Barcelona-Rome-Dubrovnik-Venice) - Spain, France, Italy

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,
Croatia
and
Greece
-this cruise has it all. Visit Toulon,
France
;
Monte Carlo
;
Tuscany
(Livorno),
Rome
and
Naples
in
Italy
; Corfu (Kerkira)
Greece
; Dubrovnik and Split in
Croatia
; plus overnights in
Barcelona
and
Venice
. Prices start from £2,799 per person

- ***Empires of the Mediterranean*** (10 days; Venice-Athens-Ephesus-Istanbul) - From ancient ruins to medieval cities, this Mediterranean journey starts in Venice and journeys to Pula and Dubrovnik in Croatia ; Kotor, Montenegro ; Santorini, Athens (Piraeus), and Ephesus (Kusadasi), plus an overnight in Istanbul . Prices start from £2,199 per person.

- ***Romantic Mediterranean*** (8 days; Barcelona - Rome) - While sailing along some of the most beautiful coastlines in the world, this itinerary offers a perfect mix of glamour, rustic pleasures and memorable landscapes with visits to Toulon, Corsica and Monte Carlo ,
France
; the Tuscan region of

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Italy
; plus overnights in
Barcelona
and
Rome
. Prices start from £1,499 per person.

- ***Mediterranean Getaway (8 days; Rome-Barcelona)*** - Explore historically significant sites and vibrant cities of the southern Mediterranean with destinations that include Rome

,
Naples
(and Pompeii),
Sicily
and
Sardinia
in
Italy
;
Tunis, Tunisia
(and Carthage); and
Palma de Mallorca

,
Valencia
and
Barcelona
in
Spain

. Prices start from £1,499 per person.

- ***Mediterranean Explorer (15 days; Barcelona - Barcelona)*** - Combining the *Romantic Mediterranean*

and
Mediterranean Getaway
, this itinerary features fabled ancient cities, medieval wonders and iconic sites that include

Toulon,
Monte Carlo
and Corsica in
France

;
Tuscany

,
Naples
(and Pompeii),
Sicily
and

Sardinia
in
Italy
;
Tunis, Tunisia
(and Carthage);
Palma de Mallorca
and
Valencia
in
Spain
; plus overnights in
Barcelona
and
Rome
. Prices start from £2,499.

- **Grand Mediterranean Tour (15 days; Barcelona-Barcelona)** - Sun-kissed shores and new places to discover await on this voyage that begins with an overnight in Barcelona and includes an overnight in Rome
. Stops include Monte Carlo, Toulon and Corsica in France;
Tuscany and Sardinia in Italy;
Tunis, Tunisia and Valencia, Spain
; plus off-the-beaten path visits to Valletta, Malta and Algiers, Algeria
. Prices start from £2,899.

Booking Details

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From now through till 31st December, 2013, Viking is offering an introductory Early Booking Discount of £500 per person. Visit <http://www.vikingcruises.co.uk/ocean> for more booking information.

***Viking Star* Technical Details**

Length overall: 745.4 ft. (227.2m); beam 94.5 ft. (28.8 m); draft 20.7 ft. (6.3 m); air draft 131.2 ft. (40.0 m); gross tonnage (GRT) 47,800 t; deadweight 3,640 t; service speed 20.0 kn; number of decks 14;classification: Lloyds Register.

About Viking Ocean Cruises

Viking Ocean Cruises focuses on destination focused cruising in the small ship category and is priced for genuine value. Debuting its maiden season in 2015, the sophisticated state-of-the-art *Viking Star*

will sail itineraries in Scandinavia and the Baltic; and the Western and Eastern Mediterranean.

For additional information, contact Viking Cruises at 0800 319 66 60 or visit

<http://www.vikingcruises.com>

/ocean

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<http://www.facebook.com/vikingrivercruises>

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