

## A Baker's dozen at Portsmouth International Port in May

With thirteen cruise ship movements in May, staff at Portsmouth International Port are gearing up for their busiest month of the year.

The majority of activity in May will see passengers starting and ending their cruise holidays at the Port. Eight cruise ships will be taking advantage of flexible turnaround services and high quality cruise facilities for embarking and disembarking passengers.

In addition five cruise ships will be arriving at Portsmouth International Port in May for a day visit, bringing passengers to explore the world class attractions in the Waterfront City and the wider area. Among them will be the National Geographic Explorer, described as the "World's Expedition Ship".

NG Explorer is the flagship of the National Geographic cruise fleet, and will arrive at Portsmouth International Port on 11th May from London. Eighty-one spacious cabins provide accommodation for just 146 guests on a small luxury cruise ship designed to access some of the most remote coastlines on the planet.

Passengers onboard NG Explorer will be on a 15 day cruise around the British Coast, stopping in Portsmouth to learn more about the ships and landmarks that make it the perfect destination for anyone wanting to immerse themselves in maritime and naval history. The next stop on the journey will be Fowey in Cornwall, with guests eventually tracing the routes of Vikings and Celts all the way around Ireland and Scotland, before reaching their final destination in Bergen, Norway.

The most frequent visitor to Portsmouth International Port in May will be Noble Caledonia's Serenissima, a small luxury cruise ship that began its life in the Norwegian fjords. Just like the NG Explorer, Serenissima proves that smaller sized ships can really deliver an amazing experience, able to access ports and parts of the coastline that larger cruise ships can't get close to.

Serenissima will cruise in and out of Portsmouth harbour four times in May. Noble Caledonia has designed a month's schedule of week-long cruises that begin and end at Portsmouth International Port. Passengers departing on May 1st will be heading off to the Channel Islands and Isles of Scilly. Other cruises in May include a holiday to discover gardens by the sea and a "Britain and Ireland Odyssey".

Another small explorer ship arriving in May is Ocean Nova. Designed for the harshest of Arctic conditions, the vessel has a strengthened hull that can deal with ice flows. It won't be a feature required in this cruise though, 'Ocean Nova' will be bringing passengers to Portsmouth at the end of a trip that will have taken them from Devon, around the Isles of Scilly to France and the Channel Islands before disembarking at Portsmouth International Port.

Swan Hellenic's Minerva will be making two appearances during May in Portsmouth, with passengers starting and finishing European cruises at "Britain's Best Connected Port". Parent company All Leisure Holidays has seen the benefit of basing ships at Portsmouth International Port for the summer season, taking advantage of excellent transport connections to London and beyond. ALH has recently extended a contract at the Port with Voyager, another of the company's ships, also due to be in Portsmouth in May.

The largest ship to visit is Albatros, owned and operated by the well-regarded German cruise operator Phoenix Reisen. At more than two hundred metres in length the vessel can carry over 800 passengers.

Albatros will be calling at Portsmouth International Port on 10th May, the second call of this year and a welcome economic boost for tourist attractions and business in the City.

Rupert Taylor, Harbour Master at Portsmouth International Port, is in charge of coordinating cruise ship visits alongside the other busy operations at the Port. Rupert said, "We've grown used to May being the busiest month, but each year it looks and feels very different. This year we are looking forward to seeing new expedition ships, including NG Orion, as well as old favourites like Minerva. The range of holidays on offer changes too, with a wonderful selection of destinations to choose from."

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