



Celebrity Silhouette in Dover

## Celebrity Silhouette arrives into Dover as the Garden of England welcomes cruise passengers back to Kent safely

Celebrity Cruises' Celebrity Silhouette arrived into the Port of Dover yesterday, as part of a series of UK coastal cruises for British passengers which launched this weekend (3<sup>rd</sup> July).

Silhouette is the second passenger call into the Port since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020. Celebrity Silhouette's arrival followed TUI's Marella Explorer which sailed in on 26<sup>th</sup> June, commemorating the eagerly anticipated return of cruise in Kent.

Sonia Limbrick, Head of Cruise at the Port of Dover, said: "It's great to see the excitement for Dover cruise return so quickly only a week after we welcomed Marella Explorer, our first passenger call since the pandemic. I have no doubt that the cruising buzz will be in full swing again soon.

It was wonderful to see Celebrity Silhouette in Dover again on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> July. My thanks go to Destination Dover, Visit Kent, Inter cruises and our partners for working with us to showcase why Dover and Kent is such a fantastic cruise destination to the special guests on board."

Deirdre Wells OBE, Chief Executive at Visit Kent, added: "We're thrilled to see cruise, which is such an important industry to Kent, re-opening again. This is a huge vote of confidence in our county's position as an international gateway, and we're really excited to start showing visitors exactly what this spectacular corner of the UK has to offer once more.

Our thanks go to colleagues at the Port of Dover, who I know have been working tirelessly in order to ensure that all passengers arriving into Dover receive the warmest, and safest, of welcomes to the Garden of England."

Dover Cruise Port is a fantastic stop for cruise customers to immerse themselves in the unique offering available across the Garden of England. With a strategically crafted team of Port and Cruise industry experts with a vast knowledge of the local region and what this amazing destination has to offer, the Port of Dover offers a fantastic choice for both Cruise Lines and passengers.

Among the passenger's onboard yesterday's vessel, the Port was pleased to welcome a group of industry press guests to the county, who enjoyed a taste of excursions available to passengers across the region, including a visit to Chequers Kitchen in nearby Deal for a hands-on local cookery experience.

Jo Rzymowska, Vice President & Managing Director, EMEA also experienced the Celebrity Cruises "Three Castles Discovery programme", which was arranged by the Port with support from Destination Dover. The tour started at Dover Castle, discovering its fascinating 2000-year history, followed by Walmer Castle and Gardens, which became an elegant seaside retreat for politicians, aristocrats, and royalty and ended at Deal Castle, one of the finest Tudor artillery castles in England.

The Port of Dover has worked closely with the UK Chamber of Shipping, Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), Cruise Britain and the many cruise lines that choose Dover in order to implement the industry framework for COVID safe cruising, and the safe return of vessels over the last week signifies an exciting relaunch to the cruise season in Kent.

Despite an extremely challenging 15 months for the travel industry, the investment of time into a series of solid relationships with Kent's leading tourism and hospitality organisations has ensured that the Port of Dover has been able to work quickly and collaboratively in order to ensure a warm - and safe - welcome for the Garden of England's first returning passenger's post-Covid.

For many years, the Port of Dover has developed a strong partnership with Visit Kent, the official destination management organisation for the county, and leading local attractions. Partners now include, Dover District Council, Leeds Castle, Canterbury Cathedral, English Heritage's Dover Castle, Deal Castle and Walmer Castle, Dover Marina Hotel & Spa, Hush Heath Estate and transport providers - Southeastern Trains and YMS Travel coach company.

This partnership is dedicated not only to ensuring cruise visitors experience the very best that Kent has to offer - from a friendly welcome to organising luxury VIP visitor packages, specialist experiences and bespoke tours - but also to engaging with the travel trade to develop inspirational itineraries that include off-the-beaten-path experiences not available to the general public.