

## Liverpool sails towards a bumper cruise season

Liverpool will welcome more than 100 cruises to its shores in 2022, as the city plans to deliver its most ambitious season yet.

The outbreak of the global pandemic in March 2020 led to the cancellation of cruises worldwide for almost 14 months. Despite this, the city's cruise industry mounted a respectable recovery in the second half of last year.

Between May and December 2021, Liverpool's terminal hosted around 100 cruises from 12 different operators, with 80,000 passengers either boarding, disembarking or passing through the city.

Although the industry is still feeling the ripple effects of Covid-19, there is optimism that this year's season will be bigger and better than ever.

With confidence high following Liverpool's handling of the return of cruising last spring, more operators are turning to the city to make bookings. Inaugural visits are expected from 10 ships including the Valiant Lady, Celebrity Apex and Norwegian Dawn. The season will get into full swing in March, with a visit from Virgin Voyages, and will also include visits from the Queen Victoria (June) and the popular Disney Magic (September). Fred Olsen will also return, having chosen Liverpool as its homeport for its flagship Borealis ship for a second season. A fitting tribute to the terminal as it marks its 15th year in operation.

While uncertainty remains around Covid-19, Cruise Liverpool will maintain its 'satellite' terminal at the Arena and Convention Centre for the foreseeable future, giving passengers and operators a safe and speedy way of joining or leaving a cruise.

Cruise Liverpool's 2022 season is expected to provide a £15 million boost to the local economy - welcome news for local businesses and supply-chains - after a difficult 24 months.

Meanwhile, the Cruise Liverpool team continues to work closely with cruise industry experts on plans to tackle the negative impact of cruise emissions on the local environment.

Liverpool City Council's Cabinet Member for Culture and Visitor Economy, Cllr Harry Doyle, said: "While we move into the 2022 season with some justifiable caution, there's optimism that we will be able to give passengers and operators passing through our terminal the experience they deserve. With all the talk of the problems the industry has faced, it's important to remember the impact that the lack of cruising has had on our loyal passengers, who work hard all year round to earn their place on board.

Plans for 2022 are shaping up nicely, and we will continue to take all the necessary precautions to make cruising through Liverpool a safe experience for everyone involved."

John Mawer, Head of Cruise Operations at Cruise Liverpool, said: "We are looking forward to marking the 15th birthday of Liverpool's Cruise Terminal later this year, and what better way to do it than ensuring record ships and passengers visiting our shores and enjoying the famous Liverpool welcome. We also want 2022 to be the year when we make progress in reducing the environmental impact of the ships on the city, there's a long way to go but talks are already underway and I'm excited to be a part of the conversation on behalf of Liverpool."