



## PSTF SHAPES CRUISE INDUSTRY AGENDA AS REGION RESTORES INT'L APPEAL

GREECE ALONE EXPECTS A 7.5% INCREASE IN PORT CALLS THIS SEASON

The **2019 Posidonia Sea Tourism Forum** is ready to welcome senior executives of the global cruise and yachting sectors for two days of thought-provoking debates on the growth drivers and trends that are currently shaping the industry's future in the East Med and Black Sea regions.

A wave of recent developments that are positively impacting on the growth of sea tourism in the East Med will be highlighted at a total of 11 panel discussions and workshops scheduled during the two days of the knowledge-exchange Forum. Among the main topics, the return of Turkish ports in major cruise line itineraries and the berth capacity increase in the East Med, including the return of Disney Cruise Line. These are some of the factors that are driving growth in the region, as evidenced by the expected 7.5% increase of calls in Greek ports this season, according to figures provided by the Union of Greek Cruise Ship Owners and Associated Members (EKFAN).

According to **Theodore Vokos, Managing Director, Posidonia Exhibitions SA**: "Greece's growing status as a world class cruise destination is also among the topics to be discussed by some fifty experts from the international cruise and yachting sectors. They will be sharing their thoughts on a variety of issues, including the impending Greek port privatisations and the strategic benefits from the promising gradual stabilization of regional geopolitical hotspots."

**CLIA Europe** and **MedCruise** will also host high profile industry meetings at the Posidonia Forum, which is expected to attract over 600 delegates and exhibitors from over 20 countries.

During the event, to be held on May 28-29 at Athens' Domotel Kastri Conference Center, executives from **MSC Cruises, Carnival Group, Royal Caribbean Cruises, Holland America Group, Silversea Cruises, Disney Cruise Line, Fred Olsen Cruise Line** and **Celestyal Cruises** will add their voices, views and opinions, as well as interact and network with representatives of regional ports and destinations.

In addition, at a workshop organised by the Hellenic Marine Equipment Manufacturers and Exporters (**HEMEXPO**), purchasing and technical managers from Royal Caribbean Cruises and Silversea Cruises will discuss the sector's procurement procedures with Greek marine equipment manufacturers that are interested in becoming suppliers to the cruise industry.

The importance of developing the cruise market in Greece will be presented by MSC Cruises during the travel agent workshops taking place under the auspices of **FedHATTA**.

**The Secretary General of Ports, Ports Policy and Maritime Investments Mr. Christos Lambridis**, representing the Minister of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy Mr. Fotis Kouvelis, said the following: "The Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy is very supportive of the fact that the Posidonia Sea Tourism Forum 2019 will examine, among other things, measures to be taken by the cruise industry to conform with new environmental regulations and the use of alternative fuels. Our Ministry's political leadership stands firm on the position that sea tourism should develop within the established legal frameworks that protect maritime labor and the integrity of the marine environment."



**The Secretary General for Tourism Policy and Development in the Greek Ministry of Tourism, Mr George Tziallas**, said: "Sea Tourism has been at the center of our development strategy and our plans for the years to come aim at improving and upgrading infrastructure in marinas, as well as in cruise ports and home ports. We issued the first ever Presidential Decrees in Greece, (concerning Chios, Alimos and Pylos), that enable us to obtain approvals for the development of mid and large sized marinas in areas protected by special planning restrictions. Our crisis management tactics in previous years and our strategic actions enabled the containment of our cruise volume share, in spite of regional geopolitical developments and their negative effects on the international cruise industry's East Mediterranean exposure."

**The President of the Union of Greek Cruise Ship Owners and Associated Members, Mr. Theodoros Kontes**, commented: "Our current target is to extend the cruising season and our efforts have already begun. The ultimate goal is to establish year-round operations, but to achieve this we need cooperation from both the ports and the state so as to improve infrastructure for safer cruise calls and develop more competitive policies on cost and services. Cruise & Stay and Short Cruise programs more widely spread in varied areas and using as hubs ports other than Piraeus, such as Corfu, Rhodes, Heraklion and even Alexandroupoli or Kavala, would be a step in the right direction."

**Maria Deligianni, Government & Public Affairs Representative Eastern Mediterranean, CLIA Europe**, said: "The economic benefits generated from the cruise industry are enormous. Based on data provided by CLIA, Greece received about 4 million passenger visits in 2017, yielding about 0.5 billion in national revenue. Cruise passenger consumption is on a steady rise and according to the Bank of Greece it has reached €65 per transit passenger and double, at €139, per homeporting passenger."



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## AIRLINE MAKES POSIDONIA VOYAGE

The **Air France KLM Group** is once again supporting the Posidonia Sea Tourism Forum this May and will be promoting its corporate programme, BlueBiz, on the exhibition floor. The airline is a major partner to the international cruise industry, with cruise-line staff and cruise ship passengers constituting a significant number of the 101.4 million passengers it carried worldwide last year.

“We are delighted to participate in the 2019 Posidonia Sea Tourism Forum,” said **Yiannis Pantazopoulos, Sales Manager Greece, Cyprus and Turkey**. “Our network serves the major ports worldwide and, therefore, is important for the transportation of seafarers and visitors to cruise-liners.” The Air France KLM group has served the Marine, Cruise and Offshore Industry from Athens for over 70 years.



## TURKISH PORT VIES FOR GROWING SLICE OF CRUISE MARKET

The **Port of Canakkale** is making its Posidonia Sea Tourism Forum debut this year. The port is strategically located between Istanbul and Kusadasi ports, Turkey’s most important cruise destinations, and it aspires to promote its offering to an international audience of industry decision-makers and stakeholders. From its location in the Dardanelles Strait, it connects the continents of Europe and Asia and, with its close proximity to the ancient city of Troy and the historical peninsula of Gelibolu, offers many attractions of historical importance. At the 100th anniversary of ‘Anzac Day’ held in 2015, Canakkale hosted 12,000 cruise guests.



## SPEAKERS’ DINNER SPONSOR UNVEILED

**Inter cruises Shoreside & Port Services** is making its first appearance at Posidonia Sea Tourism Forum this May as the sponsor of the Speakers’ Dinner. Inter cruises provides services in over 50 countries around the world working closely with cruise lines and destinations to support the development of the cruise industry, with a focus on high quality service delivery, sustainable destination development and innovative ways of using new technology to help enable a better cruise experience for guests. “Posidonia Sea Tourism Forum is an excellent opportunity for us to enhance our relationship with destinations and cruise lines operating in the region, sharing knowledge and discussing how we can collaborate to further support the development of the industry in a sustainable manner,” said **Managing Director, Olga Piqueras**.



## EAST MED’S PRIMA DONNA OF OPERA HOUSES STAGES POSIDONIA DEBUT

The **Greek National Opera (GNO)** is using this year’s Posidonia Sea Tourism Forum as a marketing platform to promote its main activities and programmes in front of an international cruise industry audience of key decision makers. Since its relocation at its new premises at the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center, the GNO has welcomed a constantly increasing number of international audiences, tourists, cultural travellers and opera lovers from around the globe.

**Vassilis C. Karamitsanis, Chair of Board at GNO** said: “Cruise travellers is a target audience that we wish to engage with to showcase the GNO’s rich cultural work. I strongly believe that through this conference, the GNO will broaden its horizons, acquire new prospects and create awareness among Mediterranean cruise visitors about a unique opera experience in our country at our state-of-the-art venue.”

