

UK cruise industry working with marine conservation charity ORCA

ORCA were welcome guests at Cruise Britain's recent summer meeting in Portsmouth and the marine conservation charity recently completed the first sailing in partnership with Ambassador Cruise Line. 11 further sailings onboard Ambience are planned.

During the 11-night sailing onboard Ambience which included calls to Belfast and Liverpool, conservationists recorded four different species of whale, including humpback whales near Iceland. Lectures, workshops, deck watches, wildlife spotting and excursions were guided by a team from ORCA who educated guests on the threats facing the marine environment, anti-whaling, and explained how tourism can help to protect marine life for future generations.

As part of the collaboration – which includes launching an anti-whaling campaign – ORCA will place two ocean conservationists on 11 Ambience sailings taking place in 2022 and 2023, totaling over 200 days. Two of those will be multigenerational and occur this summer, with ORCA working with families to teach them about the marine environment and involve them in onboard conservation projects.

The next ORCA cruise will consist of an 11-day voyage around the British Isles departing July 12, which will see the charity demonstrate the diversity of wildlife around the UK.

A 'permanent presence' onboard Ambience

We are thrilled to have launched our first ORCA-Ambassador cruise,' commented Ambassador CEO Christian Verhounig. 'Our partnership brings together incredible experiences and insights for guests, along with credible research work to the benefit of marine conservation.

'As part of the partnership, ORCA will have a permanent presence on Ambience with a dedicated enrichment area including a range of fun and exciting activities about whales and dolphins.'

The enrichment area includes educational material focussed on whales and dolphins, such as the ORCA OceanWatchers app. As well as information about ORCA's conservation programmes and how it is working to protect whales and dolphins around the world, the space also displays models of whales, dolphins and porpoises, and replica whale and dolphin bones.

The potential to reach thousands

Sally Hamilton, CEO, ORCA participated in the first ORCA sailing and said it revealed the potential to reach vast audience. 'This is a very special partnership, and it was a real privilege to be on the first ORCA-Ambassador cruise,' she said. 'We are collaborating in a multitude of ways, from training the team at Ambassador Cruise Line's head office, working on their first ship, and helping this new company make ethical and positive choices.

'The first sailing showcased the potential to reach thousands of people as part of the mission to help protect whales and dolphins and we look forward to many more educational cruises together.