

Cruising into the 2016 season at Portsmouth International Port

The winter wait is finally over and cruise ships are heading back to Portsmouth International Port, marking the start of the 2016 season, the cruise schedule can be found at www.portsmouth-port.co.uk/cruises/schedule

Each ship that calls is offered a bespoke service, so the cruise team have had a busy few months making sure the smallest detail is correct for each and every ship.

There are four cruise ship visits scheduled for April. The first cruise ship to arrive in 2016 is Swan Hellenic's 'Minerva'. Sailing in from St Malo on 15 April, 'Minerva' will disembark passengers and restock provisions for her next cruise holiday. Passengers who join the ship at Portsmouth International Port will spend the next two weeks immersing themselves in French culture, on a journey to see three rivers of France, before returning to Portsmouth on 28 April. Minerva will then start another holiday – this time exploring the Baltic, with a visit to St Petersburg in Russia.

Swan Hellenic is part of the All Leisure Holidays, a specialist cruise operator that has an ongoing commitment to base ships at Portsmouth International Port for the summer season. ALH realises that "Britain's Best Connected Port" is the perfect place for its customers to join a cruise ship – with fast journey times from Central London, and easy access by road, rail and air from all over the country. Dedicated cruise facilities and flexible services are another reason the company extended an initial five year commitment by an additional three years.

Four days after Minerva departs, 'Amadea' arrives from Hamburg for the first port of call visit of the season. 'Amadea' is the flagship for renowned German operator, Phoenix Reisen, designed to carry 600 passengers in first class comfort. Arriving at 0600, passengers will have 12 hours in Port, a full day to explore the world-class tourist attractions on the doorstep of Portsmouth International Port. 'Amadea' then departs for La Coruna in Spain, part of a three week cruise into the Mediterranean before heading back to Germany.

The cruise ship that will have travelled furthest to reach Portsmouth International Port is 'Albatros', having just completed a round the world voyage, she was last in Portsmouth on 19 November 2015. Having set off from Peru on 1 April, she is due to arrive back on the South Coast of England on 27 April. It is exciting to know that Portsmouth will be her first and last port of call from her home country of Germany on this voyage. At 205 metres in length, the cruise ship is one of the larger cruise liners to call at Portsmouth International Port this year. It is another vessel owned and operated by Phoenix Reisen.

Both 'Albatros' and 'Amadea' will make return visits to Portsmouth International Port during the 2016 season. Portsmouth is becoming increasingly popular with German passengers, who bring an important boost to the local tourist economy.

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