

Keeping cruise tourism local: Portsmouth meets with the industry



This week, (Tuesday 20 October) tourism leaders from Portsmouth and the wider south coast region were given the opportunity to promote everything the area has to offer to representatives from across the cruise industry.

At a special event created by Visit Portsmouth and Portsmouth International Port, shore excursion providers were invited to meet with local attractions, hotels and hospitality businesses to find out the benefits of cruise tourism and what passengers are looking for to create their perfect itinerary.

Executives and destination experts from Excursions Ltd, Inter cruises, European Cruise Service and Ambassador Cruise Line were all in attendance and represented the range of cruise customers travelling through Portsmouth International Port.

Andrew Williamson, head of cruise and ferry at Portsmouth International Port said: "It has been brilliant to see the engagement from our tourism partners on how they can successfully work with cruise lines and shore excursion companies, to keep passenger spend local and curate experiences for guests which are unique to Portsmouth. Already, around 50% of guest per cruise call choose to explore at their own leisure, with our shuttle service taking them to sites across the city. By providing Portsmouth focused shore excursions alongside this, we can further enhance the local passenger spend and ensure guests have memorable experiences."

Next year Portsmouth will welcome tourism calls from Viking Cruises, AIDA, Phoenix Reisen, Holland American Line, Ambassador Cruise Line and a host of other luxury and expedition vessels visiting as part of British Isles and Northern Europe itineraries.

Matthew Agg, head of destination experiences at Ambassador Cruise Line said: "It was a pleasure to be invited to participate in this event, sharing insights and networking with local suppliers to learn more about the fantastic experiences Portsmouth and the wider south coast region can offer our guests."

"Working closely with local tourism partners and excursion providers helps us at Ambassador to develop engaging shore excursions that showcase the area's unique attractions and heritage, creating memorable experiences for our guests."

Cllr Steve Pitt, Leader of Portsmouth City Council said: "Each year the port is estimated to bring in £10.8million in cruise visitor spend. Keeping this spend local is an important part of the port's role in the city, with so many world-class attractions right on our doorstep for visitors to discover. Bringing key tourism partners together to meet first hand with the companies who put together these passenger itineraries is a great way of getting the right conversations started to build Portsmouth specific itineraries."

Following the informal networking event at Portsmouth Guildhall, the cruise representatives were invited to Portsmouth Historic Dockyard where they were given an exclusive preview of the new Royal Marines Experience which is due to open this Saturday (24 October).