

Liverpool to host naming ceremony for Cunard's new ship Queen Anne

Cunard's Queen Anne will be named in Liverpool on June 3 in a celebration hosted by Busted musician Matt Willis and his TV presenter wife Emma Willis.

It will take place on the Mersey waterfront as part of the ship's celebratory lap of honour voyage around the British Isles, include live performances from eminent entertainers and be broadcast live around the world.

The inaugural voyage takes place on 3rd May.

'Cunard has an incredible bond with the city of Liverpool,' said Katie McAlister, president of Cunard. 'It is where our founder Sir Samuel Cunard began his trans-Atlantic line in 1840, so what better place to officially name our new ship than somewhere that holds so many special memories.'

She continued, 'Queen Anne is the next in a fine line for our brand and she will be...evolving our core values of luxury, sophistication, and glamour. Liverpool is known the world over as Cunard's spiritual home and we are all so excited for the city to see Queen Anne up close on her maiden call.'

Plans are being drawn for the ship's arrival to include a special salute to the city.

Further details of timings, activities, and spectator information will be revealed in due course.

British Isles Festival Voyage

Queen Anne is expected on the Mersey soon after sunrise as part of the 'British Isles Festival Voyage' itinerary. The programme sees the ship depart Southampton on May 24 with maiden calls to Edinburgh (South Queensferry,) Invergordon, Greenock, Belfast, and Liverpool. There, passengers can join a host of surprise celebrations at Pier Head, the original Cunard Building at its heart. A late evening departure bound for Cobh will follow, before the ship returns to Southampton.

Showcasing Liverpool

Councillor Liam Robinson, leader of Liverpool City Council said it was a 'huge honour' for Liverpool to be chosen as the location for the ship's naming. 'This is yet another prestigious, international event taking place in our city, casting Liverpool into the limelight once again and showcasing our enviable maritime offer...' he stated.

The event is expected to draw tens of thousands of spectators to vantage points alongside the river at Pier Head, between New Brighton and Seacombe on Wirral and on beaches at Formby and Crosby in Sefton.

Cunard ships have previously attracted more than a million spectators to the banks of the Mersey - first for the maiden call of Queen Elizabeth 2 in July 1990, and in 2015 for the three Queens 'royal rendezvous' in front of the Cunard Building to celebrate the line's 175th anniversary.