


Port of Dover Cruise sailing into 2020 as best UK departure port

With Saga's first ever brand new cruise ship – the Spirit of Discovery being welcomed into her homeport for the first time with a royal christening, and a poignant remembrance event with Fred Olsen for 300 D-Day veterans, 2019 was already set to be a year in history for Port of Dover Cruise. To top it off, the Port said goodbye to 2019 as Cruise Critic's Best UK Departure Port. 

As it starts counting down the days until Virgin Voyages' debut cruise ship, Scarlet Lady arrives into Dover in February, the Port looks back at an incredible year.

Sonia Limbrick, Head of Cruise at the Port of Dover said: "I'm so proud of what we have achieved this year – we've celebrated moments in history with our long standing partners and formed fantastic new relationships with some of the world's leading cruise lines. Our new facilities, environmental practices and the iconic scenery of the White Cliffs and Dover Castle make us really excited to welcome everyone in the future."

The Port welcomed 131 cruise ships, over 20 individual cruise lines and around 200,000 passengers in 2019. With its new multi-purpose berth open, the Port now has the capacity to accommodate four cruise ships at once for the first time ever.

In April, the Port took a stand on environmental sustainability by building a booth entirely from waste plastic collected from the world's oceans and beaches during 2018. It was the first stand of its kind and the most sustainable ever to be exhibited at Seatrade. This is an example of the good environmental practices that the Port is championing now and in the future.

In June, it hosted a special event for the Royal British Legion's D-Day 75 Voyage of Remembrance to Normandy aboard Fred Olsen's Boudicca. Around 300 D-Day veterans were waved off from Cruise Terminal 1 by the Sea Cadets, a convoy of historic military vehicles, and a serenade of wartime and swing songs.

On the 28th June, Saga's Spirit of Discovery sailed into Dover for the first time, ready for her official naming ceremony with Godmother HRH The Duchess of Cornwall on 5th July. She became the first ship to be named in Dover for over a decade and was christened during a garden party hosted at the Port by Saga.

Another milestone for Port of Dover Cruise – Hurtigruten announced in August that for the first time in its 126-year history, it will be offering winter sailings from the UK. From October 2021, the Port of Dover will officially be an all year-round cruising destination.

Glancing over what 2020 has in store, Dover is set for another milestone year.... After welcoming the epic Virgin Voyages' Scarlet Lady in February for her inaugural call, the Port will host Azamara Pursuit and Celebrity Reflection for the British Golf Open championships.

It will also see the return of Carnival Cruise Lines ship, Carnival Legend and prepares to welcome other stars of the cruise ship world to Dover for the first time next year. Ponant Le Dumont-D'Urville, Le Boreal, the National Geographic Explorer and Saga Spirit of Adventure will all be making their way to Dover.

Bookings are also coming in fast up to 2023 – an exciting future is in store!