

Portsmouth International Port looks for the cruise agents vote on 8 June

As the UK heads to the polls some of the country's top decision makers are journeying to Portsmouth International Port. However, the influential group doesn't consist of political persuaders, instead it's a group of travel agents who guide customers to the most memorable cruise holidays.

The cruise specialists will be gathering in the passenger terminal to learn more about the exciting range of ocean going holidays available from the Great Waterfront city, and the world class attractions waiting to be experienced on the doorstep of Portsmouth International Port.

CLIA, the Cruise Line Industry Association, hosts the annual Discovery Expo. It's a chance for them to introduce agents to the advantages of a cruise from Portsmouth International Port as well as highlighting the excellent travel connections and first class facilities.

Representatives from G Adventures and Scenic Cruises will also present to the agents on their latest discovery and expedition cruises, holidays on small luxury ships that aim to get guests closer to interesting destinations.

Speaking ahead of the CLIA Discovery Expo, the Harbour Master, Rupert Taylor said, "This is our fifth CLIA Discover Expo, and we know from past visits that once travel agents see Portsmouth International Port for themselves they're happy to give it their backing. Our beautiful terminal and dedicated cruise facilities are big vote winners, and when they realise that world class tourist attractions are just minutes from the gang

plank they can see why it is the perfect port of call or start point for a memorable cruise holiday."

The group of specialist cruise operators will then board Silver Explorer, a ship operated by the ultra-luxury cruise line Silversea Cruises. Rated five star by cruisecritic.co.uk, Silver Explorer is a true expedition ship with all suite accommodation. Once the agents have toured the vessel and heard more about the Silversea experience, the liner will leave Portsmouth International Port on the start of a British and Irish coastal cruise.

Silver Explorer will sail first to the Isles of Scilly and then to Skomer Island off the Pembrokeshire coast. A fleet of Zodiac inflatable power boats allow passengers to get close up to beautiful coastal areas, witnessing the natural habitats of a wide variety of sea birds. The liner then heads around the Irish Coast, before heading to the Isle of Man and Scotland. Eleven nights' later passengers arrive in Leith, having visited St Kilda and Aberdeen on their way around the north of the country.

Portsmouth International Port has become renowned for handling expedition cruises, with flexible facilities and services that match the exacting requirements of operators like Silversea. Managers hope the CLIA Discovery Expo will show the visiting travel agents that some of the highest quality cruise holidays start at Portsmouth, a city steeped in maritime history.