

# Portsmouth International Port sets sail for its busiest cruise season yet

Following the release of their latest cruise schedule, 90 ships are expected to visit Portsmouth International Port this year, making 2024 the busiest year to date.

Featuring ten inaugural calls and the return of some familiar faces, this year will see Portsmouth welcome approximately 155,000 passengers to the port. Many will begin their journey through the new cruise terminal extension, or stop off as a port of call to explore the city's world class attractions.

Norwegian Cruise Line's (NCL) Norwegian Star will become the largest vessel to ever enter the harbour when the 294m ship arrives for the first time in May, after TUI's Mein Schiff 3 broke the existing record in 2023.

Andrew Williamson, head of cruise and ferry at Portsmouth International Port, said: "I am really excited to launch our 2024 cruise schedule. We have been working hard over the last few years to boost our offering to cruise lines and attract new customers to the port and city which has paid off, with the next year looking to be our busiest yet.

"There are a number of maiden calls to look forward to including two new operators, Regent Seven Seas and new brand Compagnie Française de Croisières (CFC), which will be calling into Portsmouth for the first time in April."

Portsmouth will also be continuing its established relationship with Saga, with a second season at the port already underway and weekly calls expected throughout January and February.

August sees the hotly anticipated return of Virgin Voyages. Resilient Lady will be taking passengers on a series of three to six-night sailings around "English Sights and European Delights" as well as their popular weekend breaks to Amsterdam and Zeebrugge.

Virgin Voyages have become a familiar sight for the city which hosted the brands debut season in 2021. Since the start of their success, Virgin have made Portsmouth their UK port of call, with ships Scarlet Lady and Valiant Lady both becoming an honorary member of the city's skyline.

Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson, Portsmouth City Council's Cabinet Member with responsibility for the port said: "The port's success is very much the city's success, with profits going directly back into council services. 2024 is looking to be an exciting year with some new brands and big names returning to Portsmouth. Both crew and passengers will experience our stunning harbour entrance and have the chance to explore the world-class attractions right on the doorstep.

We also have some big infrastructure developments underway to further expand our offering for cruise lines. This includes shore power capabilities, which will allow ships to plug-in to green electricity and switch off their engines whilst in port, improving air quality and slashing carbon emissions."