

Viking Cruises makes its debut at Portsmouth International Port this Friday (29 September), with staff ready to welcome one of the world's newest and fastest growing cruise lines to the Great Waterfront City.

Portsmouth International Port has built a hard earned reputation for expertly handling ships like the Viking Star, with some of the world's most prestigious vessels visiting in recent years. Aside from first class facilities at the Port, immediate access to world famous attractions is a prime reason for quality operators choosing to schedule a visit to the Great Waterfront City.

Viking Cruises launched its first ocean ship Viking Star in 2015 and in just 2 years has been named the world's "#1 Ocean Cruise Line" by Travel + Leisure Magazine, and other industry accolades. The company, previously best known for its river cruise division, is now a major global operator and rapidly expanding its fleet of smaller ocean ships.

Matt Grimes, Executive Director, Viking Cruises, said; "We are delighted to be visiting Portsmouth International Port for the first time. It's a great destination for our guests to explore with easy access to the best of England's south coast and Portsmouth's maritime history.

Since the Viking Star set sail in 2015, Viking Cruises has launched a further three more ocean ships, Viking Sky, Viking Sea and the newest the Viking Sun, which will be visiting a host of worldwide and exotic destinations when it embarks on Viking's first world cruise."

Viking Star arrives at Portsmouth International Port after a voyage from Le Havre, part of a 15 night cruise that traces the trade routes of the middle ages. The cruise started in Viking Star's home port of Bergen, Norway. After leaving Portsmouth on the seventh day of the journey it heads to Falmouth, and then on to stops in Portugal and Spain.

Viking Star reflects its Nordic roots, with up to 930 guests relaxing in stylish staterooms and public spaces that even include a 'snow grotto' spa. The 228 metre long ship has won Five star reviews and has provided the blue print for another four identical sister ships.

Mike Sellers, Port Director, said: "The whole industry has been watching the incredible success of Viking Ocean Cruises in such a short period of time and we're delighted that Viking has chosen to bring its first ocean going vessel to Portsmouth International Port. Viking Star will feel right at home using our modern facilities at the heart of our historic maritime city. We look forward to seeing her again, and other Viking ocean cruise ships, in the near future."

A walking tour of historic Portsmouth is just one excursion being offered to Viking Star's guests, with a focus on the rich maritime legacy that runs through the City. Passengers will visit Nelson's HMS Victory, which is the world's oldest naval ship still in commission, as well as viewing the remains of Henry VIII's flagship the Mary Rose.

Situated just off the English Channel Portsmouth International Port is perfectly placed for "port of call" visits, and is scheduled to welcome Viking cruise visitors in 2018 and beyond. The Port is actively building its cruise ship business, complementing other activity at "Britain's Best Connected Port".

For further information please contact Emma Gaisford/Julie Blackwell on 01256 631696 or email julie.blackwell@purple-agency.com or emma.gaisford@purple-agency.com