

Cruise passengers arriving at Portsmouth International Port will soon be sailing straight to the heart of the Great Waterfront City, thanks to a unique free offering for port of call visitors.

Saving precious visitor time, guests will be able to step from their cruise ship onto a boat that will sail direct to Gunwharf Quays, Portsmouth's popular waterside shopping district.

The bespoke boat ride will immerse passengers in the sights and sounds of the historic maritime city; sailing through the Royal Navy Dockyard, past famous historic ships, to the iconic Emirates Spinnaker Tower. From there passengers will disembark at Gunwharf Quays to enjoy high quality outlet shopping, dining and entertainment. A short walk past Gunwharf's refurbished naval buildings brings cruise ship customers to the Historic Dockyard and the Dickensian delights of Old Portsmouth, as well as museums and other important landmarks.

Inspired by its new #portsmouthtakesyouthere campaign, Portsmouth International Port's new service for visiting cruise ship customers will allow them to start exploring the historic maritime city within minutes of arriving. The boat ride will enhance the visitor experience, with a harbour tour allowing guests to get a great view of modern warships that could include the massive new HMS Queen Elizabeth aircraft carrier.

The new boat service is completely free for port of call visitors, and will be run by experienced operators Blue Funnel. Passengers will travel in purpose built comfortable craft that are suitable for use in any weather. This is a joint project between Portsmouth International Port and Gunwharf Quays.

The first passengers to experience the new service will arrive onboard Viking Star on 29 September. It is the first time that a ship from Viking Cruises has visited Portsmouth International Port. All tourist calls in 2018 will benefit from the boat trip. It is hoped the new offering will make a stop at Portsmouth even more attractive to cruise ship operators planning their 2019 schedule.

Mike Sellers, Port Director at Portsmouth International Port said "We know that our historic maritime city makes for a fantastic port of call visit, with incredible attractions and easy access for cruise ships from the English Channel. We want our guests to experience our world famous landmarks and sights as soon as they arrive, and believe our bespoke boat service offers cruise operators yet another attractive reason for including the Great Waterfront City in their holiday schedules.

"This is a complimentary service and we'd be happy to discuss with cruise operators how this can work for their schedules."

Colin Wilding, General Manager at Gunwharf Quays said, 'We are delighted to be working in partnership with the Portsmouth International Port to deliver a unique experience to our cruise visitors.'

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