

The complete set: Virgin Voyages' Brilliant Lady arrives in the UK, making Portsmouth her first port of call

Today (Monday 18 August), marks another milestone in Portsmouth International Port's relationship with global cruise brand Virgin Voyages. The latest ship to join their fleet, Brilliant Lady, has officially arrived in the UK for the first time, making Portsmouth the first port in the world to welcome the complete Virgin Voyages fleet.

Brilliant Lady sailed into Portsmouth harbour this morning ready to spend a week in the city hosting invited guests onboard to experience the new ship before she departs for her first commercial sailing to New York on Thursday (21 August). While alongside, the Brilliant Lady crew is also engaging with the community, holding a careers event onboard.

Nirmal Saverimuttu, CEO of Virgin Voyages said: "Portsmouth has become a meaningful part of our journey. It's where we introduced Scarlet Lady to the world and — four years later — where we're celebrating the arrival of Brilliant Lady. Along the way, our full fleet of Lady Ships has passed through, making Portsmouth the first and only port in the world to have welcomed all of our vessels. Each one marks a new moment in the evolution of this incredible brand.

The city has welcomed us from the start and been a great partner. As we continue to expand globally, it feels right to mark these milestones in a place that reflects our values, shares our maritime spirit and has supported us every step of the way."

Virgin Voyages' first ship, the Scarlet Lady, launched from Portsmouth in 2021 and has returned this year for a summer season of sailings. Since becoming the UK backdrop for the brand, more than 72,000 Virgin Voyages passengers have travelled through Portsmouth, leading to significant cruise growth for the port.

Cllr Steve Pitt, Leader of Portsmouth City Council said: "Portsmouth is very proud to be dubbed the UK home for such a recognisable brand. The investment our council-owned port has seen over the last few years has attracted many regular calls from established cruise lines who bring repeat business into the city. Virgin's ships are also equipped to receive shore power, meaning they will be ready to plug in at the port and turn off their engines when the system goes live.

All profit made by the port goes directly back into funding vital council services, so it is always exciting for residents to see such a wide range of ships coming through the harbour."

While in the city, Brilliant Lady crew will be hosting 20 careers specialists from schools and colleges from Portsmouth, Gosport and beyond. They will be introduced to the different roles and responsibilities carried out onboard, so they can educate their students on careers in the cruise industry. Meanwhile, professional members of the International Chamber of Shipping and the International Underwriting Association will also meet the ship's crew to get a first-hand look at the inner workings of cruise ships.

Industry data and independent reports estimate that each cruise call can generate up to £1.5m, through tariffs, supply chain uplifts, and passenger and crew spend. Owned by Portsmouth City Council, Portsmouth International Port is predicted to contribute £10.3m in profit to the council this year.

Virgin Voyages' Brilliant Lady will be alongside at Portsmouth International Port for four days to prepare for



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her 'mermaiden' sailing, before departing at 1700 on Thursday 21 August. Sister ship, Scarlet Lady, will be continuing turnaround calls from Portsmouth until 12 September.