

Virgin Voyages season set to bring Brilliant boost to Portsmouth

Portsmouth International Port is preparing to once again become the UK destination for global cruise brand Virgin Voyages.

Their first ship, Scarlet Lady makes her homecoming on 27 July, closely followed by their newest addition, Brilliant Lady, on 22 August – making Portsmouth the first port in the world to welcome the complete fleet. The summer of sailings will bring a significant economic boost to the region, with industry data and independent reports estimating that each call can generate up to £1.5m, through tariffs, supply chain uplifts, and passenger and crew spend.

Owned by the Portsmouth City Council, Portsmouth International Port is predicted to contribute £10.3m in profit to the council this year, funding vital services for residents and investment in local businesses.

The port's partnership with Virgin Voyages began in 2021 when the new cruise line launched its first ship, Scarlet Lady, from the city. Since becoming the UK backdrop for the brand, more than 72,000 Virgin Voyages passengers are estimated to have travelled through Portsmouth, leading to significant cruise growth for the port.

Cllr Steve Pitt, Leader of Portsmouth City Council said: "The investment we have seen from the port's partnership with Virgin Voyages has had a resounding impact on the city. Not only does the port support other areas of the council financially, cruise lines are also working with local traders and communities to put Portsmouth on the map for their guests. For residents, having the city as the port of such a distinguished brand is an exciting recognition and we are proud that Virgin chose to make Portsmouth their home."

Virgin Voyages ships have become a regular sight through the harbour, with the port welcoming more than 30 calls from Scarlet, Valiant and Resilient Lady, and a further six expected this year. Six to 13-night itineraries are set to take passengers as far as Reykjavik and Morocco, as well as two special comedy and celebration voyages.

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."

Mike Sellers, director of Portsmouth International Port said: "Every cruise call to the port is highly valued and a great boost to the city. We have built a successful relationship with the Virgin Voyages team over the last few years, and we are very proud to be the brand's UK home port. Both the port and brand have grown through this partnership, with this year set to be our busiest year for cruise so far, with over 90 calls expected. Virgin Voyages' fresh approach to cruising also brings a new demographic through the terminal, who get to experience all the brilliant benefits of travelling from Portsmouth."

Virgin Voyages' Scarlet Lady will make her highly anticipated return on Sunday 27 July, with regular sailings throughout August and September. Brilliant Lady will arrive on 18 August for a selection of technical and media events before setting sail for New York where she will make her debut.