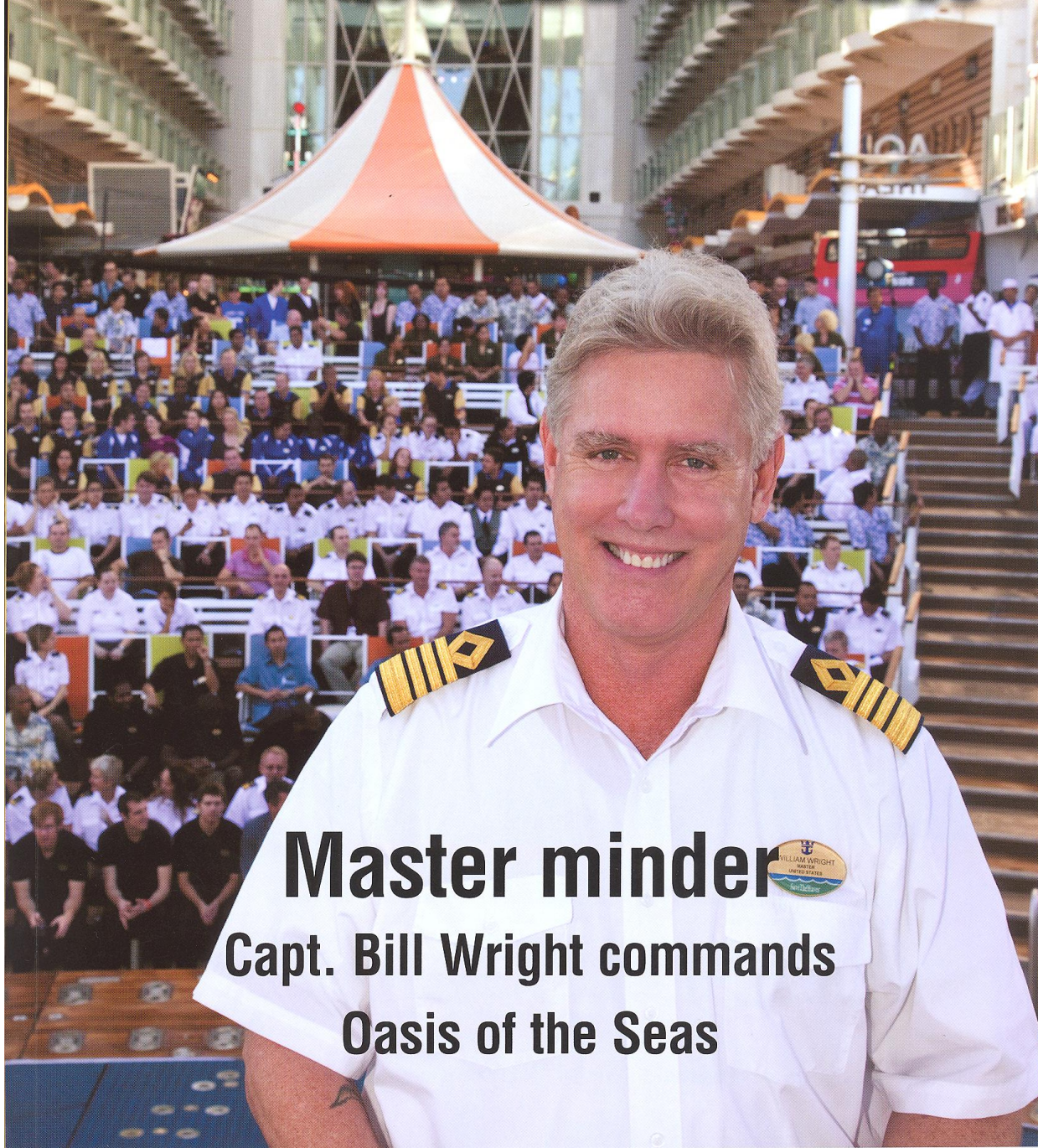


Seatrade

DECEMBER 2009 QUARTERLY

CRUISE REVIEW



Master minder

**Capt. Bill Wright commands
Oasis of the Seas**

Mediterranean

Port development

PHOTO: JOAQUIN GIRO



Cartagena expanding

Stretching out

A round up of latest port news from the Mediterranean basin by **Mary Bond**

Mixed fortunes for Med ports this year with leading West Med hub Barcelona aiming to repeat its 2m passenger milestone, first set last year. September traffic at the Spanish port was up slightly from a year ago, and took the first nine months of 2009 total to 1.6m, or 3% ahead of 2008.

Malaga is a popular winter destination with 95 ships visiting this season including turnarounds by Costa, MSC and Royal Caribbean. The final passenger count for 2009 is likely to be 450,000, a jump of 27.5%. Port of Málaga has been investing heavily in infrastructure including two new berths and passenger terminal. New access roads are expected to be ready for 2010, representing an investment of €12.6m.

Having split away from Almeria four years ago and set up on its own, Motril Port founded in 1908 promotes itself as being 100 years old and the youngest port in Spain. 'With a 299mtr long dedicated cruise pier and other berths up to 560mtr, any size ship can be accommodated but we are looking for medium and smaller sized ships,' says Jose Bermudez del Valle, general manager of Motril Port Granada.

Being located 45 minutes from the famous Alhambra Palace is a selling point, but del Valle is quick to point out there are plenty of things to see and do in Motril itself, illustrated in a new quality brochure which highlights a rum cellar tour, sugar cane museum, caviar fish farm at Riofrio – the only ecological caviar in the world – and, for winter calls, ski-ing in the Sierra Nevada (1.5 hours away). 'Of course tours to

Alhambra are within easy reach, including special entry to places that are not generally open to the public for ships using Motril,' says del Valle.

Cartagena is anticipating a 20% increase in business in 2010 when 60 ships bringing 79,000 passengers are scheduled. Extension of the city centre cruise berth resulting in a 500mtr long quay is underway plus expansion of the terminal. Construction should be finished next year.

AIDAluna, Bleu de France and Seabourn Odyssey were new visitors amongst 140 calls and around 170,000 passengers visiting Valencia in 2009. Next year, traffic will increase slightly where plans are afoot

to invest in new passenger facilities.

Palamos is anticipating an increase of 5,000 more passengers in 2010 on 40 calls up from 32 calls this year when Mein Schiff, Ocean Village and Silver Wind were first time visitors. Apart from tours to Barcelona, popular are Costa Brava excursions including a visit to the Dali Museum located in Figueres.

Marseille continues to rank as the top French cruise port with 51 different ships calling in 2009 and an estimated 680,000 passengers, including 180,000 on turnarounds.

Marseille Provence Cruise Terminal a consortium run by Costa, MSC and Louis

Gibraltar



Gibraltar is growing from strength to strength as a cruise destination, having played host to 340,000 passengers from 267 vessel calls this year – a trend that Albert Poggio the UK representative for the Government of Gibraltar believes will continue in 2010. 'There are 30 new vessels due to enter the market through to 2012 and many of those will call at Gibraltar. We are also hoping to attract more German cruise lines as this market is growing quicker than the UK,' says Poggio.

Larger ships should increase visitor numbers, 'hence we have planned an

expansion of the current cruise terminal with two-thirds more space and an extended quay,' he says, adding that the new ferry terminal is currently available as a stop-gap measure to aid passenger spillovers.

One of the popular tours is a spectacular cable car ride to the top of the Rock operated by MH Bland (pictured). The company, which celebrates 200 years in 2010, also operates a fleet of 22 coaches (of 22 seats each) for its Dolphin World tour, a travel agency and currently acts as agent for about 25% of all cruise ships calling at Gibraltar. 'Our business continues to do surprisingly well this year and we are cautiously optimistic for 2010,' says George Gaggero, deputy chairman of MH Bland. 'The lower value of the pound has meant that British passengers would rather spend their money in Gibraltar versus Spain.'



Nice – one of the five ports under French Riviera Ports' umbrella

Cruises, guarantee throughput of 450 calls a year and one million passengers by 2012, as well as providing a quality service for all ships using the facility.

Toulon has had an exceptional year with 115 calls and 250,000 passengers. Part of this growth was due to four large ships re-routing to Toulon due to windy conditions in Marseille and Villefranche. Three of the unexpected visitors were MSC ships -Fantasia (twice) and Splendida plus Costa Concordia.

Host venue for Seatrade Med 2010 is Cannes, one of five ports under French Riviera Ports' umbrella. Together Cannes, Nice, Villefranche and Antibes received 519 calls this year and almost 700,000

passengers, a figure which will be repeated in 2010. Golfe-Juan, new on the cruising map is being promoted as a marquee destination offering repeat callers a chance to discover the French Riviera through different eyes.

Must-see attractions for passengers (and delegates) visiting Cannes are La Croisette: an area of pavement cafes, luxury hotels, elegant ships and palm trees lining the Bay of Cannes and Allee des Etoiles du Cinema, showcasing handprints of the greatest cinema actors of all time at the foot of the Festival Center.

South Corsica's four cruise ports will finish 2009 with a significant increase on the 259 calls and 438,708 passengers of last

Mediterranean

year buoyed by the first full year of operation at Ajaccio's new 292mtr cruise berth, plus a year-round cruise season with winter calls by MSC Poesia.

Royal Caribbean's Navigator of the Seas became the biggest ship to call at the birthplace of Napoleon in 2009 and in 2010, RCI's Independence of the Seas will take over the record. A parking area for 20 buses close to the berth plus new welcome and security facilities will be ready mid-2010. CCI Ajaccio Corse du Sud also invested €3.5m in refitting and extending berthing at Bonifacio, Porto Vecchio and Propriano. The latter's two quays have been extended and a new landing area built in a €6m investment. Next year a fourth dolphin will be added allowing ships up to 240mtr to call.

Genoa is expecting 25% growth in 2010 when 270 calls are scheduled to bring around 800,000 passengers. Winter calls are boosting the Italian port's figures with 53 calls planned between November 2009 and March 2010, including Louis Cruises' Louis Majesty.

Livorno inaugurated a new cruise facility at Pier 75 this summer which proved to be a popular berth for vessels up to 200mtr as it is located 500mtr from downtown in a redeveloped area called Porta a Mare. Now dredging is underway to ultimately create a berth length of 350mtr with 10mtr water depth alongside.

This winter 43 ships will call in the

Portuguese ports



Lisbon's Manuela Paricio and Portimao's Luis Monteiro

A new cruise quay at Santa Apolonia in the heart of the city will be completed by first quarter 2011, paving the way for improved facilities for both ships and passengers calling in Lisbon. A new terminal is also part of the plan and the Port Authority will tender for this together with Lisbon Municipality. Around 400,000 passengers will call in 2009 with winter traffic being constant at around 50 calls each season.

Portimão in south of Portugal continues to expand as a cruise destination.

This year ship calls have doubled and passenger numbers tripled as 41 ships

bringing 30,000 visitors visited the Algarve's only cruise port. Thomson Cruises, Silversea and Windstar are amongst those lines including Portimao on itineraries, informs Luis Monteiro, Portimao Turis.

Portimao Port Authority is studying plans to dredge the channel to 10mtr and lengthen the cruise berth to 700mtr to take two 2,000 passenger ships at the same time. The €50m project will take four years to complete.

Over in Ponta Delgada in the Azores, president of Portos dos Acores, Carlos Adalberto Silva is delighted with the €50m waterfront development which was inaugurated last year. 'The new passenger terminal and convention centre is working well and sheltered quay has provided an ideal sheltered quay for ships calling in the archipelago,' he reported.

Madeira Ports, is the newest member of Medcruise, having joined the association in October. Funchal, which currently receives approximately 400,000 passengers per year from about 300 cruise calls, is optimistic about the benefits of the Medcruise brand. 'We hope that this strategic move will boost traffic in the lower summer season and will

make Madeira a more profitable year round destination,' says Bruno Guilherme Pimenta de Freitas, president of the administrative council, pictured below with Maria Joao de Franca Monte.



The port has embarked on construction of a new €12.8m cruise terminal capable of handling 1,000 passengers in transit per hour. 'We expect to launch operations by March 2010,' Freitas says. 'The project also features a berth for two vessels of 300mtr or three vessels if they are 220mtr in length,' he adds.

Funchal is eyeing turnarounds too. 'We are also in talks with the airport authorities and are looking to increase flights from destinations such as Germany, the UK and US,' noted the executive.