

# CRUISE SHIPS SET SAIL ON VIRTUAL WATERS



to almost 20 deaths.

However, most cruise lines need to stay “afloat” and get in touch with the clients through virtual tours and video channels, offering experiences with chefs and all kinds of activities to keep the traveling spirit alive.

**In 2020, the sector expected to reach 32 million cruise passengers, according to forecasts by the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA).** Although the standstill won't allow the sector to reach this figure, hiring of itineraries for the next season continues.

With the vast majority of cruise ships moored in ports and without set dates to resume activity, virtual tours are the way the companies encourage travelers to continue dreaming of the perfect vacation at sea:

Abe Hughes, director of **Royal Caribbean Cruise**, launched at the end of March some type of a virtual cruise dubbed “Virtual of the Seas”, which recreates different itineraries from those offered by the company.

In addition to traveling in the Caribbean, to the private island Cococay or Alaska, every day and through a Facebook profile, Hughes shares tours, reveals facts about the ships, offers recipes, hosts contests and activities such as treasure hunts.

It also features contributions from the amazing crew, such as Royal Caribbean's chief meteorologist James Van Fleet.

Since these days most of us are locked up at home, **Hurtigruten Cruises** opens a window for the breeze to come in and brings us, virtually, the fresh air of new destinations.

From April 8, every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, Hurtigruten shares a new video featuring the beautiful nature of places such as Spitsbergen (the largest islands of the Svalbard archipelago), the Hjørundfjord, or the Lofoten islands, but also monographs on animals such as the sea eagle or its refurbished ships.

From the destinations to the food offered onboard, from training to wellness ideas, the luxury company **Crystal Cruises** shares all kinds of thematic experiences through social media and the ‘Crystal@Home’ campaign.

The campaign is organized by weekdays, with inspirational podcasts shared on Mondays, fitness workouts on Tuesdays, recipes for creative cocktails on Thursdays, Fridays of live performances (via Facebook Live) by artists that are part of the entertainment crew, and Sundays of cooking lessons with head chef John Ashton as he goes through the ship's menu.

What if we make the most of these days by checking the ships on which we'd love to go on a cruise? Different cruise lines offer virtual tours in which you can get to explore every corner, like **MSC Cruises**, which showcases ships like the new MSC Grandiosa, among others.

Additionally, the company offers activities to entertain kids, such as the Kelly & Kloe series, the adventures of two teenagers on board, and Cabin 12006, a successful web series that has garnered more than 3 million views on YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and Tik Tok. The company also offers dance lessons with the cruise line's mascot Doremi, karaoke, and Spotify playlists.

If you want to focus on the destination instead of the ship, go on an adventure with **Lindblad Expeditions**, the cruise line's newest virtual program. Recreate the daily life on a boat with the activities of each moment, from destination features called 'Ahhh Moments', to discussions on photography techniques, concerts and the cocktail hour, which involves a recap and reveals upcoming projects.

**Viking tv** is a television channel aimed at travelers in times of coronavirus. Its contents, transmitted on a regular schedule, offer programs dedicated to museums on Mondays, to arts and music on Wednesdays, to series - like 'At Home at Highclere Castle' hosted by Lady Carnavon herself - on Fridays, and to wellness on Saturdays, including yoga and meditation sessions. It also features documentaries and special programs hosted by some of the company's managers on destinations and inspiration.

The luxury company **Silversea** has announced the launch of a collection of unreleased content that it will offer through social media, but also directly via emails, with the purpose of reaching out to the curious travelers, whether or not they have previously joined one of their cruises.

The first proposal includes a trip around the world through 60 cocktail recipes, with bartending tutorials that are already available on Silversea's YouTube channel.

**Another one involves inviting passengers to share experiences and memories of past trips with the hashtag '#YearningToSailAgain'.**

Unlike what companies and businesses usually do, it is time to have a strategic view of the future, so let's not forget that this crisis is temporary and, sooner or later, we will come out of it.

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