

ST. PETERSBURG BECOMES A NO-GO DESTINATION FOR CRUISE OPERATORS



The situation in Ukraine is escalating and more and more shipping companies and tour operators are stopping their Russia offers. As expected, the war in Ukraine is having a strong impact on tourism. As the situation in Eastern Europe worsens, more and more companies are speaking out, blacklisting Russia.

First and foremost, several cruise operators announced cancellations and changed routes. This mainly affects St. Petersburg, but also ports in the Black Sea and rivers. Several cruise lines have already taken Russia out of their programs and the country has become a no-go destination. **It is estimated, however, that even more cruise operators will announce cancellations as soon as the replacement routes have been determined.**

MSC has suspended planned calls in St. Petersburg from the end of May until October. The four ships MSC Preziosa, MSC Grandiosa, MSC Poesia and MSC Virtuosa are affected. The line is in contact with alternative ports such as Stockholm, Helsinki and Tallinn to confirm calls for the ships. MSC also plans to update its website to reflect the confirmed details of the new itineraries. Currently, no MSC Cruises ship calls at St. Petersburg.

Sea Cloud Cruises has also removed the St. Petersburg calls of the new big ship Sea Cloud Spirit from this year's schedule. The former tsar's city had originally been on the schedule four times for the Baltic Sea debut of the three-masted full-rigged ship. Sea Cloud Cruises will now develop a new itinerary for the voyages in June and July. The booked guests have already been informed about the decision.

TUI Cruises announced earlier last week that it will remove the Russian port city of St. Petersburg from its schedule due to the attack on Ukraine. "In light of the events, we have decided for ethical and moral reasons to adjust the schedules of our Baltic Sea cruises from May to October 2022: We will no longer call at St. Petersburg," a spokeswoman for the shipping company in Hamburg announced.

Alternatively, cities in the Baltic region such as Klaipėda in Lithuania and Riga in Latvia or Copenhagen in Denmark and Visby in Sweden will be served.

Carnival Corporation, which includes Aida Cruises, had already announced that none of its nine brands will realize calls in Russia in the near future. Also last week, AIDA Cruises addressed customers and announced that there will be no calls in Russian ports in the upcoming 2022 summer season - thus reinforcing Carnival Corporation's statement. In particular, the Baltic Sea cruises are affected, where St. Petersburg was to be called.

Norwegian Cruise Lines was the first cruise line to announce that it was removing Russia from its program. About 50 itineraries were affected that had included a stop in St. Petersburg this summer season. "This is disappointing," Norwegian CEO Frank Del Rio said, "Saint Petersburg is one of the crown jewels on the Scandinavian routes. But of course, there are alternatives."

Atlas Ocean Voyages, Viking Cruises, Saga Cruises and Windstar Cruises will also stop calling in

Russia for the time being.

Date: 2022-03-07

Article link:

<https://www.tourism-review.com/cruise-operators-st-petersburg-has-become-a-no-go-destination-news12429>