

CYPRUS: CRUISING INTO TOMORROW

Cruise holidays have been steadily growing in popularity for decades.

Not even James Cameron's 1997 cinematic recreation of the sinking Titanic dented consumers appetite to see the world from the deck of a cruise ship. In fact, this year alone, 27.2 million passengers are expected to take to the seas on a cruise holiday, up from 25.8 million in 2017, according to the CLIA.

The cruise industry is also bucking trends and challenging negative connotations by attracting an increasingly younger customer base. The average age of passengers is down from 56 in 2002 to around 46 years old, according to the latest industry forecast from the CLIA.

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Maiden voyage

The growing demand for cruise holidays has been sustained by the improvement of comfort and the facilities provided on cruise liners, as well as the growing variety of choice provided to seasoned cruisers.

The growth of the cruise liner has rapidly accelerated over the past two decades. In 1999, **MS Voyager of the Seas**, operated by Royal Caribbean International, set off on its maiden voyage as the largest cruise liner in the world, boasting a gross tonnage of 137,236 and amenities such as the obligatory cinema, a wedding chapel and FlowRider surf simulator.

FLOWRIDER®



Ocean oasis

Fast forward to the year 2018 and Royal Caribbean's MS Symphony of the Seas - an Oasis-class cruise ship - is carving up the oceans waves with a gross tonnage of 228,081 and the capacity to hold 6,680 passengers, as well as 2,200 staff.

This behemoth houses an ice-rink, a 43-foot rock climbing wall and a 'central park' that contains over 20,000 tropical plants.

Money maker

The economic impact of the cruise industry echoes the vastness of the ships.

In 2016, the industry employed an estimated 1,021,681 people and created a total economic global output of €103 billion.



Cruising into tomorrow

With these trends showing no sign of tapering off, it's no surprise that port terminals are climbing over one another to accommodate the oceans gigantic liners.

But not all ports can do so, as cruise ship terminals require being close to popular routes, as well as nearby international airports for onwards travel. This narrows down the scope of viable cruise terminals and makes some locations more attractive than others, such as Cyprus.

ONE STOP SHOP

The island of Cyprus is the third largest island in the Mediterranean Sea, (both in terms of area and population).

It's geographical location (being in the eastern part of the Mediterranean Sea), ample pool of labour and two international airports give it a particular fecundity for becoming a successful cruise liner onestop shop.

Tide-free

On the southern fringe of Cyprus, grazing the warm waters of the Mediterranean, lies the ancient city of Limassol, where DP World have a 25 year concession to exclusively operate the multi-purpose terminal.

DP World Limassol is designed to accommodate the largest operating cruise vessels with a tide-free draft of up to 11 metres and three 400 metre berths that can accommodate multiple cruise vessels.

As one of three DP World terminals that can accommodate cruise vessels, Limassol welcomes cruise passengers leaving the Suez Canal and entering the Mediterranean and offers onward travel via its international airports and provides local adventures with copious tourist activities.

DP WORLD
Limassol



Tourist spot

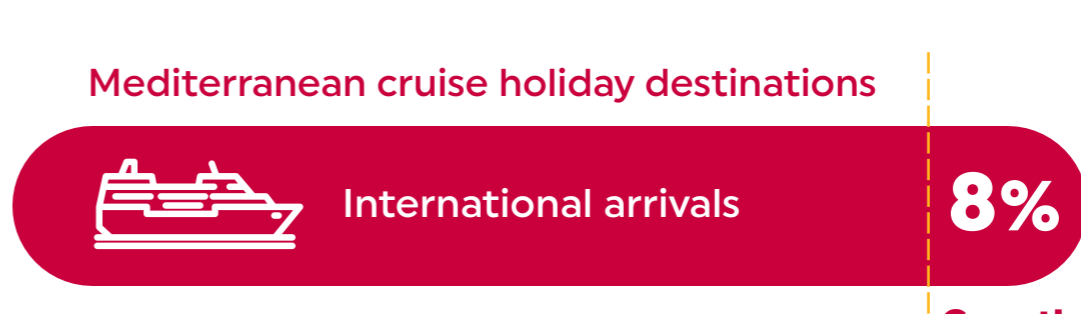
According to the OTIE, the impacts of cruise terminals on Mediterranean islands are slightly differentiated from that of mainland destinations.

For example, islands organisational and economic structure tend to be emphasised by the prevalence of small enterprises. The regular and predictable flows of tourists provided by some cruise liners at ports, such as DP World Limassol, typically benefits those involved in these businesses most.

Continued growth

Mediterranean destinations are leading the worldwide growth of cruise holidays, recording extraordinary arrivals with 8% more international arrivals than in 2016.

The aforementioned CLIA report projects stronger growth for the cruise industry in 2018 with 27.2 million passengers expected to go on a cruise in 2018.



MAKING WAVES

With the demand for cruise holidays only going in one direction and technological advances making bigger ships both possible and economically viable, port operations need to better understand the implications of accommodating ocean liners.

For those operators who have the capacity to accommodate cruise liners, as well as access to increasingly popular cruise routes, the potential is as immense as the ships.

