

How the cruise industry is shaking off hardship

This is a special feature from *PAX International's* [October 2021 digital edition](#), on [page 28](#).



The first passengers will look over the poolside scene on the *Wonder of the Seas* in March of next year

The breakneck growth of the cruise industry that was continuing unabated in 2019 may have run aground in the last year and a half, but as summer moved into fall some of the venerable ships of the industry's major players were returning to itineraries in the Caribbean, Europe and Japan. And in 2022, one cruise line is planning something truly big.

The lines have had more than a year to prepare for passengers still worried and uncomfortable with travel in any form – but the adventurous may have never stopped. In mid-September the Cruise Line International Association ([CLIA](#)) reported that since the previous summer, approximately 1.2 million people have boarded cruise lines for trips in various parts of the world. The increase in interest and the desire to open the seas again prompted Celebrity Cruises to take out a two-page ad in the September 19 *New York Times* posing the simple question: “Isn’t it time?”

The fall travel season promises more choices following the September White House announcement to lift international travel restrictions starting November 19, 2021. Days after the announcement, CLIA said it appreciates the Biden Administration’s recognition of the importance of international travel to the U.S. economy.

“The cruise industry is an important driver of international visits to the United States, prompting approximately 2.5 million international visitors to travel to the United States to embark on a cruise in 2019, representing nearly 18 percent of all U.S. cruise embarkations,” said the CLIA press release.

CLIA says international cruise visitors in the United States spend US\$4.5 billion annually on hotel stays, transportation, retail and other U.S. businesses, supporting nearly 60,000 American jobs.

Cruise giant [Carnival](#) announced that in September and October the number of ships sailing again will total 15. In September, the *Carnival Glory* began operating out of New Orleans, the *Carnival Pride* from Baltimore and the *Carnival Dream* from Galveston, Texas. In October three ships will be operating out of South Florida: the *Carnival Conquest* and *Carnival Freedom* will operate out of the Port of Miami, while the *Carnival Elation* will sail out of the Port Canaveral. Wrapping up the October launch is the *Carnival Sensation* out of Mobile, Alabama.

“Our plan envisions successfully bringing back our entire fleet by the end of the year,” said Carnival President Christine Duffy, in the announcement of the ships’ launch.

The onset of fall caught [Norwegian Cruise Line](#) in the middle of its Great Cruise Comeback and redeploying the *Norwegian Epic* and *Norwegian Gateway* in the Mediterranean. A third of the line’s 17 ships are now back in operation after a suspension of service for more than 500 days.



The *Norwegian Getaway* sailing out of St. Thomas

The final three ships with names that honor the seafaring Dutch will be going into service in 2022 when the *Noordam*, *Oosterdam* and *Westerdam* of Holland America Line sail itineraries in Japan, the Mediterranean and Alaska.

With ships calling in countries around the world, the cruise industry faces much the same challenges as the airlines. They must negotiate a patchwork of regulations and that are specific to each country. In September, Carnival policy allowed adults and children under 12 travel unvaccinated. They are subject to pre-embarkation testing and testing before debarkation on cruises longer than four days. The test fee is US\$150 per person. Norwegian Cruise Line requires all guests and crew to be fully vaccinated. Holland America Line also requires proof of vaccination upon boarding.

But an industry that has spent decades seeking to outdo each other cannot sit still long and by [Royal Caribbean International](#) will add an Oasis Class ship that promises to fill the bill, for now. In March, RCI will launch the *Wonder of the Seas* on itineraries out of Fort Lauderdale. Billed as the largest cruise ship in the world, the nearly 7,000 people the ship will accommodate will find themselves wandering through eight distinct “neighborhoods.” Waterslides, surf simulators, rock climbing walls and zip lines will entertain young and old and in the evenings a boardwalk inspired by Coney Island will take visitors to a dining spot known as Central Park.

Exhibitors announced for Cruise Ship Hospitality and Cruise Ship Interiors Expos

The Cruise Ship Hospitality Expo and Cruise Ship Interiors Expo is set to take place in Miami Beach this autumn. Here is a preview of hospitality and interiors exhibitors:

Mapei - Booth 255: The MAPEI Marine line products are developed through a process of research, with attention innovation, sustainability and the environment, to provide complete system solutions. MAPEI also specializes in other chemical products; waterproofing, mortars, grouts, concrete admixtures, repair products, decorative and protective exterior coatings. www.mapei.com

Globaltext USA - Booth 609: Globaltext Fine Linens seeks to revolutionize the hospitality industry by supplying the very best cotton that Turkey and USA have to offer. www.globaltexusa.com

VIKAND - Booth 530: VIKAND is a leading global maritime health solutions provider offering healthcare and air and surface decontamination solutions to the industry. Solutions encompass a full range of services, technologies, and products for the safety of crew and guests onboard cruise ships, yachts, and commercial vessels. www.vikand.com

Gojo - Booth 635: Gojo helps people experience greater health and wellness by leveraging 75 years of experience to introduce improved ways to keep hands, and the surfaces they frequently touch, clean. The clearest example of this commitment is our PURELL® brand - a badge of hand and surface hygiene that is trusted everywhere. www.gojo.com

DEDON - Booth 319: DEDON furniture brings outdoor space to life for many of the world’s leading hospitality brands. From restaurant terraces to poolside lounges, exclusive spas to rooftop bars, far-flung beach clubs to the decks of luxury cruise ships, DEDON furniture helps to create unforgettable atmospheres keeping people coming back for more. www.dedon.de

Florida Seating - Booth 211: Florida Seating, a Certified Woman Owned Business, is a leading supplier of commercial furniture to the restaurant, hospitality, and design industries. Committed to providing durable seating with the shortest possible lead time and at the most competitive price. Florida Seating works with award-winning designers and strive to expand the furniture collection to meet the highest standards for sustainability, quality, and trends. www.floridaseating.com

Creative Works - Booth 374: Entertainment options to keep guests engaged and help create

amazing memories. Creative Works, helps create powerful emotions and memories through immersive attractions like virtual reality, escape rooms and laser tag. www.thewoweffect.com