



Jul 08, 2015 14:44 BST

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines returns to Belfast in 2015 with Black Watch

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines will return to Belfast in Autumn 2015, with three cruises on board 804-guest Black Watch. Fred. Olsen will be offering guests a choice of a 16-night W1527 '**Scandinavian Capitals**' cruise, an eight-night W1518 '**Discovering Spain & France**' adventure and a 14-night W1519 '**Morocco, Portugal & The Canaries**' getaway.

Nathan Philpot, Sales and Marketing Director for Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, said:

"Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines is pleased to be back in Belfast for a third season,

following a successful series of cruises in 2013 and 2014.

“It is a great opportunity for our guests from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to take a cruise so much closer to home, from ‘right on their doorstep’, and enables them to start their holiday in a relaxed, stress-free way...ready for the warm Fred. Olsen welcome that our guests have come to expect from us!”

One Northern Irish guest on board Fred. Olsen’s popular 10-night ‘Morocco, Portugal & Spain’ cruise ex Belfast in September 2014 commented upon his positive experience:

“Half-an-hour after leaving my house, I was settled in my cabin on board ship, marvelling at how easy and convenient the whole experience was. After my taxi dropped me at the terminal, my suitcase was whisked away by a porter who informed me that the next time I would see my luggage it would be in my cabin. The check-in process was so simple - I presented my passport and was issued with a boarding card, then it was on to a shuttle bus, which delivered me to the ship’s gangway, from where I was able to proceed directly to my cabin.”

Fred. Olsen’s three cruises from Belfast in 2015 are:

- **Black Watch’s 16-night W1527 ‘Scandinavian Capitals’ cruise, ex Belfast on 30th September 2015.** Prices start from £1,104 per person.

This Baltic cruise covers seven countries and seven different cities. The first port of call is vibrant **Amsterdam** (Netherlands), where guests can stroll through the streets and past pretty canals, head into the countryside to admire the windmills, or simply enjoy a spot of ‘people-watching’ in one of the numerous cafés.

The next port of call is **Stockholm** (Sweden), for an overnight stay. Set on 14 islands at the start of an archipelago, which stretches out into the Baltic, the city’s ‘Old Town’ – ‘Gamla Stan’ – is a delight of narrow streets waiting to be explored.

Next, Black Watch will move onto Estonia’s picturesque capital, **Tallinn**. Made up of medieval town walls, cobbled streets, churches and towers, with an

enchancing UNESCO-listed Old Town, this Hanseatic city is sure to delight guests with its beautiful, fairytale setting.

From here, the cruise continues onto **St. Petersburg** (Russia), where guests should take time to visit to the architectural highlights of the Hermitage, Catherine's Palace and the Peterhof.

Next, Black Watch heads to **Helsinki** (Finland), where Art-Nouveau buildings, museums and cafés all vie for guests' attention.

Then it is onto the stunning city of **Copenhagen** (Denmark), which has something for everyone; from the fun-filled Tivoli Gardens, to the former sailors' district of Nyhavn, with its gabled houses and outdoor restaurants.

The final 'Scandinavian Capital' on this cruise is **Oslo** (Norway), where the medieval Akershus Castle and Fortress dominate the harbour front, and the National Museum houses Edvard Munch's iconic 'The Scream'.

- **Black Watch's eight-night W1518 'Discovering Spain & France' cruise, ex Belfast on 16th October 2015.** Prices start from £710 per person.

The first port of call is colourful **La Coruna**, radiating with traditional Spanish charm. From here, guests can visit the sacred pilgrimage city of Santiago de Compostela, or bask in the Autumn sunshine in the many cafés and bars along the coast.

Black Watch will then glide onwards to **Getxo** (Spain), for visits to **Bilbao**. Be sure to visit the Museo Guggenheim, one of the world's most impressive buildings, which houses hundreds of sculptures and paintings from local and international artists.

Next comes **La Pallice** (France), for trips into nearby **La Rochelle**. Here, many fortifications are still standing, including the two towers that welcome boats into the bay.

Black Watch will then call at her last port, **Lorient**, in France. This spectacular, unspoiled town is famous for its food and wine. Visit the 'Cité de la Voile' – 'City of Sailing' – a modern interactive exhibition and museum, or take a tour to the Trevarez Castle and Gardens.

- **Black Watch's 14-night W1519 'Morocco, Portugal & The Canaries' cruise, ex Belfast on 24th October 2015.** Prices start from £1,151 per person.

Black Watch's first port of call is Morocco's **Casablanca**, a bustling mix of mosques and markets, where guests can barter for colourful clothing, leathers or spices.

The next visit is to **Las Palmas**, Gran Canaria, boasting a wealth of Neoclassical and Renaissance architecture. Guests should take time to visit the Santa Ana Cathedral and the Iglesia de San Juan, with their intricate latticework and ornate tiled ceilings.

Black Watch then sails onwards to **San Sebastian** (La Gomera) for the day. Here, guests can watch the sun set in the National Park of Garajonay, or take a trek to the enchanting rainforest.

This Canaries cruise will then take in **Santa Cruz**, in Tenerife, where the intriguing 'Pyramids of Guimar' take pride of place. For those who 'love to shop until they drop', the main destinations for picking up trinkets are Playa de Las Americas and Puerto de la Cruz.

Fragrant **Funchal**, on the 'Garden Island' of Madeira, comes next, with its botanical gardens, alive with blossom and rainbow hues. There is also the opportunity to sample the world-renowned afternoon tea at Reid's Hotel, or take a stroll in the landscaped grounds.

The last stop on this Iberian cruise is **Leixoes**, for trips into **Oporto**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Here, guests can take a trip to the wonderfully ornate Sao Francisco Church, or sample the area's delicious Port wine.

All prices are based on two adults sharing an inside twin-bedded cabin, and include all meals and entertainment on board, and port taxes. Guests can also choose to upgrade to Fred. Olsen's 'All-Inclusive' drinks package, from just £10 per person per night.

Fred. Olsen is pleased to have been awarded the 'Gold Trusted Merchant' status by independent review site Feefo in 2015, for the second year in a row. This accreditation is based on genuine customer feedback and, to date, Fred. Olsen has received over 11,000 reviews, with 95% of these being in the

‘Good’ or ‘Excellent’ categories.

Fred. Olsen Cruise Line operates in the UK with four intimately sized ships for a more personal cruising experience.

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