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‘A Date with Death & The Duchess’ – Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines unveils its new ‘Poison, Murder & Mystery Cruise’ in Summer 2015

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines is proud to introduce a very unique cruise experience for Summer 2015, aboard its 880-guest ship *Boudicca*, the like of which guests will never have seen nor heard of before! Fred. Olsen will be offering an exclusive sailing, created around secrecy and suspense, with *Boudicca*’s 16-night D1516 'Poison, Murder & Mystery Cruise', departing from Rosyth (Edinburgh) on 10th July 2015, linking the Duchess of Northumberland’s 'Poison Gardens' at Alnwick Castle – which starred as ‘Hogwarts School of Witchcraft & Wizardry’ in the *Harry Potter* films – and that of Mr. Fred. Olsen Senior in Guimar, Tenerife.

Fred. Olsen unveiled this participative 'murder mystery' cruise at an exclusive VIP launch at The Tower of London, hosted by The Duchess of Northumberland and Mr. Fred. Olsen Senior, on 24th July 2014.

Guests will get to take part in this great adventure as it unfolds on board, whilst *Boudicca* takes a leisurely cruise to **Leixoes** (for Oporto, Portugal), **Funchal** (Madeira), **Santa Cruz** (Tenerife), **Las Palmas** (Gran Canaria), **Lisbon** (Portugal) and **Newcastle** (UK) – famous as the 'Agatha Christie Route'.

This intriguing 'Poison, Murder & Mystery Cruise' is a first for any cruise line, and is the result of a creative collaboration between Mr. Fred. Olsen Senior and Her Grace, the Duchess of Northumberland. Fred. Olsen is delighted that, as well as hosting the largest participative 'murder mystery' event ever held on a cruise ship – which will be officially witnessed on board by 'Guinness World Records' – the Duchess will be joining the ship for part of the voyage, along with Mr. Fred. Olsen Senior, it is hoped.

Her Grace, The Duchess of Northumberland, said:

"In Fred. Olsen, I was excited to meet someone with a fellow passion for poison plants, and together we have sown a seed that has flourished into this fascinating cruise experience for Fred. Olsen's guests next year, linking our two unique gardens.

"I wanted to create a 'theatre of poisons and poisoning', and working with Fred. has allowed me to bring this desire to life aboard a cruise ship, where guests can sample something new, something different and something very special indeed!"

Mr. Fred. Olsen Senior, Chairman of the Fred. Olsen group of companies, said:

"It seemed to me the most natural thing to undertake such a cruise, with so few 'Poison Gardens' in Europe. For me, it is very special to be able to link these gardens with a unique cruise itinerary, and we know that many of our guests share an enthusiasm for gardening. We also know, from previous experiences such as our *Titanic* Centenary cruise in April 2012, that they enjoy dressing up and taking part in murder mystery-themed events."

Highlights of this cruise include:

- Visit to The Alnwick Garden and Alnwick Castle – the grand and magnificent home of the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland. Here, guests will not only see the Gardens – which have been transformed by Her Grace with an investment of over £40 million – but also visit the only 'Poison Garden' in Britain.

- In Tenerife, discover the mythical 'Pyramids of Guimar' and their own 'Poison Garden'.

- Throughout the cruise, the subject of poison and mystery will be everywhere, with plays, talks and special tours – and a murder mystery starting as soon as guests get on board, which will run through to a 'Grand Finale' at Alnwick Castle.

- **Felix Francis**, younger son of thriller-writing legend, Dick Francis, will be penning a short crime story on board as the intrigue around this cruise unravels!

Guest speakers on this cruise include:

- **Peter Dean**, Her Majesty's Coroner for Essex and a former Forensic Medical Examiner with the Metropolitan Police, with some fascinating and gruesome insights into his varied and often 'dark' career.

- **Doctor Dan Jones**, eminent poison Historian and Archaeologist, who gives a closer look into Rasputin and the Borgias family's darkest secrets!

- **Doctor Mark Siddall**, curator of 'The Power of Poison' exhibition at The American Museum of Natural History, will be cooking up all manner of potions and poisons in a hands-on, interactive demonstration.

The cruise returns to Edinburgh on the morning of 26th July 2015, after two weeks of mystery, poison and murder at sea!

Prices for the once-in-a-lifetime holiday experience start from just £2,499 per person, based on two adults sharing a twin-bedded, Inside cabin, and include accommodation, all meals and entertainment, plus port dues. If guests book by 31st August 2014, they can take advantage of free door-to-door travel for guests who live within 250 mainland miles of Rosyth* or up to £150 per

person free onboard spending credit.

So, escape with Fred. Olsen to a place where murder, intrigue and suspense rule, where a light is shone on some of the darker moments of human history and behaviour! This is a journey of the mind as well as the body that guests will remember and cherish forever!

*The length and nature of this sailing are suited to the adult traveller; therefore only those over 18 are able to join.

For further information on Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, visit the website at www.fredolsencruises.com Book online, call Reservations on 0800 0355 242 (Monday – Friday, 8am – 8pm; Saturday, 9am – 5pm; Sunday, 10am – 4pm), or see an ABTA travel agent.

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Note to Editors:

The Duchess of Northumberland is the visionary behind The Alnwick Garden, the largest visitor attraction in the North East. It is a registered charity, which aims to raise aspirations and run charitable programmes for the education and well-being of the local community. It offers local people access to projects, events, services and opportunities and it aims to promote a healthy, fulfilled quality of life. Alnwick Castle and The Alnwick Garden welcome over 800,000 visitors each year.

Jane has travelled worldwide and around the UK, giving over 400 lectures about The Alnwick Garden and its charitable ethos. She is particularly interested in natural poisons and aphrodisiacs and has built one of the only 'Poison Gardens' in the world, in which every plant is a killer. She had a trilogy of books published called 'The Poison Diaries' and recently a 'Little Book of Poisons, Potions and Aphrodisiacs' and one of 'Jams, Jellies and Preserves', with her own range of marmalades being commercially made from the oldest known recipe in the world. The latest book, 'The Little Book of Cocktails, Cordials and Elixirs' – just recently launched – features some of the oldest recipes for cocktails and cordials ever recorded.

Mr. Fred. Olsen Senior is a Norwegian shipping and energy pioneer who,

since the age of 26, has been Chairman of the holding companies of the Fred. Olsen group of companies. This includes Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, the famous ship builders Harland & Wolff, and a number of other travel-related organisations. As a successful innovator, Fred. has been awarded a great many accolades, including honorary Doctorates, Fellowships and an honorary Professorship.

Fred. has a passion for art, with many original pieces being found on board Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines' four cruise ships, *Balmoral*, *Braemar*, *Boudicca* and *Black Watch*. His interest in horticulture, especially poisonous plants, led to the creation of his own 'Poison Garden' in Tenerife and his friendship with Her Grace, The Duchess of Northumberland.

Fred. is aged 85 and is a Norwegian citizen, residing in Oslo, but spending much of his time in Scotland.

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

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