



Mar 20, 2014 14:23 GMT

A discovery of wine on board Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines' 'Iberian Sea & Gastronomy' cruise in Spring 2014

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines is pleased to announce that expert oenophile **Martin Ward** of Wine Educators International will be joining *Braemar's* 12-night ['Iberian Sea & Gastronomy' cruise](#), M1414, departing from Harwich on 20th May 2014. Martin will be providing tutored wine tastings and interactive lectures for guests throughout this cruise, which will stop in six beautiful Iberian ports, including Oporto (from Leixoes) – which was recently voted as the 'Best European Destination 2014' by European Consumers Choice – as well as Bordeaux, where guests will find world-famous vineyards.

Martin Ward, who set up Wine Educators International 20 years ago, has several decades' experience of working within the wine-tasting and training industry, in many different cultures and environments around the world. From buying and marketing wine professionally to researching and working in wine producing countries and regions, Martin believes passionately that the subjects of wine and food, either combined or separately, should be treated with respect, yet enjoyment.

Martin Ward, Managing Director of Wine Educators International, said:

“I am very much looking forward to welcoming Fred. Olsen's clients on this cruise and sharing the passion that is wine and food, both on board and during our port calls. I want guests to feel free to ask me any questions at any time throughout the cruise and I really hope that everyone involved will find the tastings and tours to be informative yet informal.”

On board *Braemar's* Iberian cruise this spring, Martin will be hosting two wine-tastings for guests, one at the beginning of the cruise on 22nd May 2014 and the second on 30th May 2014. Guests will be able to sign up on board, to join either the first or second session, both of which will be held in one of *Braemar's* fantastic restaurants.

Guests will be taken on a discovery of White, Red and Rosé wines and, after the visit to Oporto (Portugal), the local tippie of Port, too, in an informal and fun atmosphere. Martin will take guests through the history of wine, as well as advising them on wine and food matching, explaining why, conventionally, we like and do not like certain wines, and giving guests the chance to taste his recommendations of the wines served in the restaurants and bars on board.

For those who are not able to secure a place on one of the wine tastings, Martin will also be hosting an interactive lecture in one of the lounges during the cruise, when staff from the ship will join Martin on stage for a live wine-tasting, similar to Fred. Olsen's popular and hugely entertaining 'Can't Cook, Won't Cook' cookery demonstrations on board. Martin will also be available to offer wine recommendations to all guests throughout the cruise.

Braemar's Iberian cruise calls first into **Oporto** (from **Leixoes**) in Portugal, where guests can visit one of the many Port cellars or take a leisurely stroll along the famous River Douro.

Next visit is to **La Coruna** (Spain), where guests can indulge in a fresh seafood platter or tasty traditional tapas, whilst taking in the wonderful local architecture. From here, a tour to see UNESCO-listed Santiago de Compostela Cathedral is also highly recommended, as this is one of the world's most important places of pilgrimage and has been on the revered 'Way of St. James' since the Early Middle Ages.

Guests will then arrive in **Aviles** (Spain). This relaxing town is full of history, charming beaches, a bustling port, amazing gastronomy, an incredible art scene and very welcoming people. Tasting some of the local sweet cider and cheese is one of the highlights.

After a call at **Santander** (Spain), with its stunning beaches and Altamira Caves, *Braemar* continues onto **Getxo** (for Bilbao, Spain), for an overnight stay. This gives guests the chance to visit the pretty Basque town of **San Sebastián**, which boasts two of the top 10 restaurants in the world, Mugaritz (Number Four) and Arzak (Number Eight) <http://www.theworlds50best.com/list/1-50-winners/>

Braemar will then arrive in **Bordeaux**, for another overnight stay, a city long famed for producing world-class wines. There is plenty of opportunity for food and wine lovers to sample all that this fantastic region has to offer, and the city itself hosts a number of interesting museums in grand settings; be sure to visit the Place des Quinconces, one of the largest squares in Europe. *Braemar* then returns to Harwich.

Prices for this cruise start from £799 per person, based on two adults sharing a twin-bedded, inside cabin, and include accommodation, all meals and entertainment on board, and port dues.

Guests can also choose to upgrade to Fred. Olsen's ['all-inclusive' drinks package](#) for just £10 per person, per night*, which allows guests to enjoy selected beers, wines, spirits and soft drinks all day within the price, as well as receiving a 50% discount on premium and branded drinks, wines (excluding Champagne) and cocktails.

Fred. Olsen is proud to be the only UK travel company to receive a coveted 'Gold Award' from leading consumer review website Feefo, having achieved a 95% service rating of 'Excellent' or 'Good' in over 5,600 genuine, independent guest reviews in 2013.

Fred. Olsen was also delighted to be voted 'Best Affordable Cruise Line' and runner-up 'Best Cruise Line' in the '*Cruise International Awards 2013*', and 'Best Value for Money' in the *Cruise Critic* 'Editors' Picks UK Awards 2013'. Fred. Olsen's *Braemar* was also recently announced as the top winner in *Cruise Critic's* 'Cruisers' Choice 2014 Awards' 'Best Small Ship for Embarkation' category, and '*Black Watch* as 'Best Small Ship for Shore Excursions'.

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

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