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Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines celebrates record-breaking start to 'Wave Season'

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines has today[18th January 2016] revealed that it has received a phenomenal boost to its 'Wave Season' sales, with the first week of January 2016 being the most successful in the company's history, in both yield and volume terms. Sales are up +27% on the same time last year, which was also a record-breaker.

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

"We are in a very fortunate position that our smaller ships provide us with the

ability to create and tailor-make such rich itineraries, for example, our popular river and waterways cruises on shallow-drafted *Braemar*. Our regional departures also give us the significant benefit of making a Fred. Olsen cruise even more accessible to our guests.

“A number of our sailings for 2016 are already sold out, or only have a handful of cabins left. We will be moving our largest ship, *Balmoral*, to Newcastle this year, which was an ambitious decision, but the travel trade have been extremely supportive, and our sales in the North East are well ahead of expectations.

“A key strategic driver for us is to attract new guests to the brand. Whilst we have a very high repeat rate – with a significant number of Fred. Olsen cruisers returning time and time again – January has seen the share of ‘new to cruise’ guests shift by seven percentage points, and the average guest age has fallen by 11 months across the fleet. This is against a backdrop within the cruise industry that has seen the average age grow by five years, with an increasing reliance on existing customers.”

An added incentive to ‘new to Fred.’ guests is that they can now book a future Fred. Olsen cruise whilst on board, for just a £1 deposit, as part of the company’s unique ‘Enjoyment Promise’; this is also very positive for travel agents, as guests can transfer their booking back to their preferred agent whilst on board.

Fred. Olsen is attributing its ‘Wave Season’ sales success to a combination of factors:

- a very strong promotional campaign, offering free ‘tips and tipples’ – whereby Fred. Olsen pays guests’ gratuities and includes a complimentary all-inclusive drinks upgrade – up to £400 cashback, and a ‘three for two’ multi-buy cruise deal
- a highly-targetted multi-media sales campaign, including national daytime TV, regional radio advertisements, posters, press advertising, door-drop leaflets, magazine inserts and enhanced online activity
- highlighting ‘Fred’s Enjoyment Promise’, which is unique within

the cruise industry and guarantees that first-time Fred. Olsen cruisers will be flown home and given their money back, if they do not enjoy their holiday

- offering exciting and adventurous itineraries with shorter durations – for example, 80% of all guests booking Fred. Olsen's new five-night 'Norwegian Fjords' cruises from Newcastle are first-time cruisers, and are seven years younger than the Fred. Olsen average

Fred. Olsen will be launching its new 2017/18 cruise programme in March 2016, which will see its fleet of four smaller, more intimate ships – *Balmoral*, *Braemar*, *Boudicca* and *Black Watch* – sail from ten convenient regional UK departure ports to over 200 destinations worldwide.

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

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

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