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Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines celebrates year of award-winning Virtual Cruising as it looks ahead to a return to sailing this summer

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines is today celebrating one year since it set sail on its first Virtual Cruise, as it looks ahead to a return to sailing with a new-look fleet this summer.

Fred. Olsen set sail on its first virtual cruise on 9th April 2020 on a Norwegian fjords voyage that celebrated the line's heritage. Since then, it has set sail on 51 further virtual cruises, with destinations including the UK, Iceland,

Caribbean, Canary Islands and a World Cruise, to name a few.

Each virtual sailing has celebrated all that guests know and love about cruising, both aboard and ashore. In the past 12 months, the cruise line's social media team have curated 745 posts as well as 248 videos, which have been viewed 1.9 million times.

The content has included videos from evening entertainment acts, weekly live quizzes hosted by some of the Fred. Olsen team and tutorials from onboard hosts and guest speakers, including ukulele and art lessons. There have also been virtual formal nights, with guests encouraged to dress in their finery and share pictures ahead of 'Saturday Night Showtime' performances.

The programme has secured a number of industry awards for Fred. Olsen, including the 'Customers at the Heart of Everything - Gold Award' at the CX Awards 2020, 'Best Use of Social Media' at the inaugural CovidComms Awards and 'Best Use of Social Media' at the Travolution Awards 2020.

Ben Williams, Head of Digital at Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, said:

"When we launched our Virtual Cruising programme last April, we did so with one thing in mind – our guests.

"Not only has it allowed us to communicate important information about our business and upcoming cruises, it has enabled us to connect with our guests at a time when social interaction is limited, and bring the joys of cruising direct into their homes.

"It has been a real pleasure to see our guests sharing their photographs and memories and connecting with like-minded travellers on our Facebook page, and to meet some new future guests, too!

"Thank you to each and every one of you who has joined us for any or all of our Virtual Cruises so far. We look forward to welcoming you aboard our new look fleet for real as we return to sailing again this summer."

The Virtual Cruise programme continues next week with a sneak peek inside its two new ships, *Bolette* and *Borealis*.

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines has unveiled an 11-strong programme of 'Welcome Back' British Isles sailings aboard *Bolette*, *Borealis* and *Balmoral*, the first of which will set sail on 5th July 2021.

For further information on Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines' virtual cruising programme, visit fredolsencruises.com/the-bridge or search Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines on Facebook. For more information on Fred. Olsen's 'Welcome Back' sailings, visit fredolsencruises.com/welcomeback

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

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