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Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines crowned 'Best Cruise Lines for Groups' at the 'Group Leisure Awards 2011'

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines was once again delighted to be crowned the most group-friendly cruise line at this year's 'Group Leisure Awards'. Having seen off strong competition, the cruise line received the 'Best for Groups' award at a special awards ceremony in Birmingham on 21st September 2011. This is the second consecutive year that Fred. Olsen has won this coveted award, which recognises the very best groups cruise experience, from the initial booking process to onboard facilities, to the quality of excursions offered.

The awards were first established in 1997, and are voted for by readers of Group Leisure magazine and groupleisure.com. The readers of Group Leisure include Group Travel Organisers (GTOs) for major sports and social clubs, retired groups, National Trust groups, PROBUS groups, Women's Institutes, U3A groups, as well as groups of friends, family and like-minded people.

Ellie Fulcher, Group Sales Executive for Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, said: "We are absolutely delighted to accept this prestigious award, for the second consecutive year. At Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, we are very proud of the personalised service we are able to offer to Group Travel Organisers, which is reflected in our company ethos of 'It's all about the people!'

"We provide tailor-made quotations to suit individual group requirements, and we are also able to offer visits to our ships, in UK ports, so that GTOs can see what we have to offer at first hand. Consequently, more and more groups are discovering the advantages and great value for money that a Fred. Olsen cruise represents.

"We are thrilled that GTOs feel that we offer the best group sales service,

onboard facilities, and shore excursions for groups, and would like to thank everyone that voted for us!”

The glittering ceremony, which took place at the Hilton Birmingham Metropole, was attended by some of the top names in the travel industry, and the awards were presented by television celebrity Gary Lucy and Group Leisure magazine Editor, Rob Yandell.

Rob Yandell said:

“The group travel market is still incredibly strong as friends and colleagues take advantage of special discounts and experiences they wouldn’t normally enjoy travelling as individuals. Our readership of active group travel organisers has a tough job ensuring everything they plan runs smoothly so it is particularly interesting to see who, what and where they think is the best.”

This Group Leisure award follows hot on the heels of Fred. Olsen’s success at the recent ‘Cruise International Awards 2011’. The cruise line swept the board at these new consumer awards with the hotly-contested accolade of ‘Cruise Line of the Year’, as well as being voted ‘Best Educational Cruise’ for its Vistas onboard enrichment programme – which has featured the likes of The Archers and an Agatha Christie-themed cruise – and ‘Best Live Performance’ for classical duo, The OperaBabes, as part of Fred. Olsen’s popular ‘Music & Laughter’ programme, along with a ‘Highly Commended’ award for ‘Best Value Cruise Line’.

For further information on Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, visit the website at <http://www.fredolsencruises.com/> To request a group quotation, call Fred. Olsen’s dedicated Group Sales Department on 01473 746169 or e-mail group.sales@fredolsen.co.uk

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

Contacts



Georgina May

Press Contact

PR Manager

georgina.may@fredolsen.co.uk



Georgie Long

Press Contact

PR Executive

georgie.long@fredolsen.co.uk