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## **Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines sweeps the board at the first-ever 'Cruise International Awards'**

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines has swept the board at the first-ever 'Cruise International Awards', held at the Soho Hotel, London on 14th September 2011. The cruise line won the hotly-contested accolade of 'Cruise Line of the Year' in these new awards, which attracted some 180,000 votes from readers of Cruise International magazine and keen cruise customers, across 20 categories. The top award was presented to Fred. Olsen by Adam Coulter, Editor of Cruise International magazine, and celebrity business 'guru' Nick Hewer of TV's The Apprentice.

Fred. Olsen was also voted 'Best Educational Cruise' for its Vistas on board 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, who electrified audiences on board Black Watch's Mediterranean cruise in October 2010, as part of Fred. Olsen's popular 'Music & Laughter' programme.

One of the finest classical acts around, The OperaBabes – comprising Rebecca Knight, soprano, and Karen England, mezzo soprano – have performed for Her Majesty The Queen on several occasions – including the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall, and the launch of the Commonwealth Games – and have sung with many of the world's leading orchestras. They have released two highly-successful albums – 'Beyond Imagination' in 2002, and 'Renaissance' in 2006 – and Fred. Olsen customers will have an exclusive opportunity to see them perform again on Braemar's 'Spain and Portugal' M1123 cruise in October 2011.

Nigel Lingard, Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines' Sales and Marketing Director, said:

“We are delighted to have been voted ‘Cruise Line of the Year’ in the inaugural ‘Cruise International Awards’, and we would like to say a very big thank-you to the magazine’s readers and our legion of loyal supporters – who managed to cause the Cruise International website to ‘crash’ due to the volume of votes they cast in our favour!

“These awards are testimony that we are ‘hitting the mark’ with our onboard ‘added extra’ activities, as both our cultural enhancement programme Vistas and our ‘Music & Laughter’ entertainments programme have received recognition. We will continue to listen to our guests to ensure that they benefit from the very best onboard cruise experience that we can possibly provide, and we look forward to next year’s ‘Cruise International Awards’, where we hope to repeat this year’s successes!”

Adam Coulter, Editor of Cruise International, said: “Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines arguably offers the most quintessentially British of all cruise experiences. The combination of warm, friendly crew; prices in pounds sterling; a very British ‘country house’-style atmosphere – formal but not stuffy; and value for money is what keeps passengers coming back time and time again – 60 per cent are repeat bookers. A great win for Fred. Olsen – congratulations!”

Judge John Honeywell (aka Captain Greybeard) said: “Victory for Fred. Olsen demonstrates the importance of great customer service, a warm home from home feel and a very loyal customer base.

“The four vessels in the Fred. Olsen fleet are small to medium-sized by today’s standards but the friendly atmosphere, choice of destinations and value for money are clearly just what UK passengers are looking for. ”

Fred. Olsen was also highly commended in a fourth category, ‘Best Value Cruise Line’. Other categories in the ‘Cruise International Awards 2011’ included ‘Innovation of the Year’, ‘Cruise Celebrity of the Year’, ‘Most Outstanding New Ship of 2010/2011’, ‘Best Entertainment Activities’, ‘Best Shore Excursions’, ‘Best for Kids’, ‘Best Dining’, ‘Best for Well-Being’, ‘Cruise Travel Agency of the Year’, ‘Coolest Cruise Captain’ and ‘Cruise Destination of the Year’.

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

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