



(L-R) Maureen Quinn of 'Just for Groups!' presents Sophie Thomas, Sales Executive – Groups, Hayley Walker, Sales Assistant – Groups and Ellie Fulcher, Sales Manager – Groups with the trophy alongside special guest and co-host, Magician Ben Hanlin.

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## Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines voted 'Best Cruise Line for Groups' at the 'Group Leisure & Travel Awards 2017', for a record seventh time!

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines has once again been crowned '**Best Cruise Line for Groups**' by readers of leading travel title, *Group Leisure & Travel* magazine, for a record seventh time! This prestigious award recognises the very best groups cruise experience, from the initial booking process to onboard facilities, and the quality of excursions on offer.

Fred. Olsen was recognised at a special awards ceremony at the Hilton Birmingham Metropole Hotel on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2017, and beat off stiff competition from other finalists: Cruise & Maritime Voyages, P & O Cruises, Thomson Cruises and Viking Cruises.

This year is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the awards, which are voted for by active group travel organisers from sports and social clubs, retired associations, special interest societies and other groups, on what they consider to be the best groups experience across 21 categories.

Ellie Fulcher, Sales Manager Groups at Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, said:

“We are really honoured to win the ‘**Best Cruise Line for Groups**’ trophy for a record seventh time, especially on this milestone year for the awards ceremony. It means a great deal to us to be recognised in this way and we would like to thank everyone who took the time to vote to us.

“We have had an excellent year, with an increasing number of group travel organisers and their groups choosing to travel with us across the globe, including several new groups opting for our exciting new exotic fly-cruise long haul holidays to destinations such as the Indian Ocean Islands.

“We are committed to offering our groups the very best, tailor-made cruise experience and we would like to thank our shore and ship-based staff for making the group travel experience so rewarding, from start to finish. Our group travel team is now looking forward to a successful and exciting 2018/19 cruise season!”

Feedback from Fred. Olsen’s group guests has shown that the intimate and very welcoming atmosphere on board *Balmoral*, *Braemar*, *Boudicca* and *Black Watch* is very well-suited to the groups travel market, as well as the excellent value for money that a Fred. Olsen cruise offers. Groups receive so much included in the price of their cruise fare – all meals and entertainment on board the ship, as well as port taxes, and the opportunity to upgrade to the ‘all-inclusive’ drinks package from just £15 per person, per night.

Fred. Olsen’s bespoke groups’ service appeals to all types of groups, including family and friendship groups, corporate and incentive groups, and all kinds of clubs, associations and societies. Fred. Olsen can even offer exclusive use of

an entire ship for a full-ship allocation group.

Groups are welcome on all Fred. Olsen's cruises and, depending upon the size, they may be eligible for a choice of 'added value' benefits. There are many extras that can also be arranged to make the experience even more special, such as a private 'Traditional Afternoon Tea', group dining plans, exclusive use of public rooms on board for group activities, specialist group shore tours and priority disembarkation for groups travelling by coach.

During its 2018/19 cruise season, Fred. Olsen will be setting sail from five convenient UK departure ports – Southampton, Dover, Liverpool, Newcastle and Rosyth (Edinburgh) – taking guests to no fewer than 228 destinations in 73 countries around the globe.

This '*Group Leisure & Travel Awards*' follows hot on the heels of Fred. Olsen's recent success in the 2017 Group Travel Awards, where it was crowned 'Best Cruise Line Operator for Groups', for the seventh consecutive year, as voted by readers of Group Travel Organiser magazine – an unprecedented 'first' for the magazine.

**For group bookings and enquiries, please contact Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines' dedicated Group Sales Department on 01473 746169 (Monday to Friday, 9am until 5pm), or e-mail [group.sales@fredolsen.co.uk](mailto:group.sales@fredolsen.co.uk). For further information on Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, visit the website at [www.fredolsencruises.com](http://www.fredolsencruises.com)**

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**Photo caption:**

**Left to Right:** Maureen Quinn of 'Just for Groups!' sponsor of the 'Best Cruise Line for Groups' category, presents Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines' Sophie Thomas, Sales Executive – Groups, Hayley Walker, Sales Assistant – Groups and Ellie



Fulcher, Sales Manager – Groups with the coveted winner’s trophy at the ‘Group Leisure & Travel Awards 2017’ at the Hilton Birmingham Metropole Hotel on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2017, alongside special guest and co-host, Magician Ben Hanlin.

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

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