



**SUN, SAND AND SEA...AND MSC SEASIDE:  
THE PERFECT INGREDIENTS FOR A SUMMER HOLIDAY IN THE  
MEDITERRANEAN THIS YEAR**

- *The iconic MSC Seaside to sail in the Mediterranean for the first time this summer with generous outdoor spaces and connecting guests with the sea*
- *Ship's itinerary to feature two brand new destinations – Taranto and Siracusa, in sunny Puglia and Sicily, Italy – and a private beach experience in Taranto exclusive for MSC Seaside guests*

**Geneva, Switzerland – 22 April 2021** – MSC Cruises today announced that this summer guests of *MSC Seaside* will be able to enjoy a private beach experience in Taranto, Puglia exclusively for them. This is in addition to the previously-announced two brand new destinations in sunny southern Italy with Siracusa in Sicily in addition to Taranto.

This is the first time *MSC Seaside*, one of MSC Cruises most iconic ships, will spend a season in the Mediterranean giving guests the opportunity to discover and experience the vessel. Designed as the ship that follows the sun, everything about *MSC Seaside* is designed to connect her guests with the sea and this is the perfect ship for the warm weather of the Mediterranean this summer. With outdoor spaces that are some of the most generous at sea and a whole host of innovative features, guests on board *MSC Seaside* will be able to enjoy a one-of-a-kind memorable holiday at sea.

*MSC Seaside* will join the Company's flagship *MSC Grandiosa* in the Mediterranean and welcome back guests from 1 May with a brand-new itinerary offering embarkation in all four Italian ports, with 7-night cruises calling Genoa, Valetta in Malta, Siracusa, Taranto and Civitavecchia.

Under MSC Cruises' current health and safety protocol, ashore visits are possible only as part of a protected excursion, so that guests go ashore to discover and explore the different attractions whilst maintaining a safe social bubble. However, a summer holiday would not be complete without a visit to the beach and so MSC Cruises has developed a special offering for Taranto so that *MSC Seaside* guests can spend a day at the beach safely, with lidos that are exclusively for the use of MSC Cruises guests.

**MSC Cruises CEO Gianni Onorato commented,** *"As we continue to offer one of the safest ways to take a holiday, we knew that we needed to make sure that we delivered on all of the elements of a summer holiday and this meant finding a way to enable our guests to also spend a day at the beach, whilst ensuring that the same high standards of health and safety were implemented ashore as they are on board. We have worked to privatise three lidos with all the facilities of a beach club so that our guests can enjoy this beautiful stretch of coast in Puglia, close to Taranto. With this, we have also established a blueprint for this type of experience and we will now work to introduce more private beach experiences at other destinations this summer."*

Situated in the southern part of Italy in Puglia, one of the most famous and beautiful regions in the charming and sunny South of Italy, the historic port of Taranto is an undiscovered gem. MSC Cruises guests

will be able to enjoy a day relaxing day at a Blue Flag<sup>1</sup> beach that offers fine sand and a gentle southern breeze at the edge of the clear blue waters of the Ionian Sea - a rival for any Caribbean beach. The clarity of the sea here is incredible and with a gently sloping seabed, the crystal waters can be easily enjoyed by all whether just a gentle dip or an active swim.

Three lidos on the Marina di Taranto will be exclusively available for MSC Cruises guests on the day that the ship calls and "bubble transfers" will be on hand to take guests to the beach and then back to the ship at fixed times throughout the day. The lidos are equipped with convenient beach club facilities needed for this day at the seaside – with umbrellas for shade and comfortable loungers, a bar and restaurant as well as toilets, showers and changing cabins as well as. Guests will have the peace of mind that the health and safety measures at the lido will follow the same as the ship and that everything is taken care of for them – all they need do is relax and enjoy the sun, sand and sea.

**Mr Onorato continued,** *"We are very pleased to be able to introduce yet another new destination with Taranto to our itineraries this summer. We have been working in close collaboration with the local authorities to offer a range of different protected shore excursions to enable our guests to discover this beautiful part of Italy, offering something for all types of traveller from visits to historic sites, taking in the stunning countryside through to enjoying the regional gastronomy and of course, a day at the beach."*

A range of different protected shore excursions are available in Taranto and these include:

- **Taranto City Tour:** get ready to discover the "city of the two seas", as Taranto is often referred to. Founded by the Greek in the VIII century B.C., Taranto was one of the most important cities in Magna Graecia and traces of the Greek colonization are still left today.
- **The "Sassi" In Matera:** the city of the wonderful "Sassi", caves, and the first town in the world to be declared a UNESCO World Heritage site. These caves were inhabited from the Neolithic times right up until 1952. Perhaps because of its unique and tangible history, the atmosphere here is extraordinary and the place exudes a mystic air.
- **Alberobello:** famous for the whitewashed *trulli* buildings, this town in the Puglia region that forms the top of the "heel" of the boot of Italy. Thanks to its distinctive round stone houses with conical roofs, known as "trulli", the town was added to the list of UNESCO World Heritage sites in 1996. Your tour includes a guided walk through the delightful streets of this most unusual village.
- **Lecce, the famous Baroque town:** enjoy a visit to a place that is often called "the Florence of the south", the lovely old Apulian town of Lecce, which was influenced and shaped by periods of Roman, Greek, Ostrogoth and Norman rule.
- **Art and Flavours of Puglia:** Grottaglie is the first destination of this discovery of Puglia's art and traditions. Enjoy a guided walk around the city centre en route to the ceramic district to visit a ceramic workshop and admire the pottery Grottaglie is so famous for.
- **Ostuni and its oil mill:** "the white lady" stands on three hills in the area of Murge. It was an important Greek – Roman city in the first century AD. The picturesque medieval village with its white houses with winding streets and cobbled alleyways dominates the plains below. The tour includes a visit to a typical oil mill with a tasting session of olive oil.

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<sup>1</sup> The iconic Blue Flag is one of the world's most recognised voluntary awards for beaches, marinas, and sustainable boating tourism operators. In order to qualify for the Blue Flag, a series of stringent environmental, educational, safety, and accessibility criteria must be met and maintained.

### ***MSC Seaside* to call another new destination, Siracusa in Sicily**

*MSC Seaside* will also call at another new destination for MSC Cruises, the Sicilian port of Siracusa where guests can discover the rich historical and archaeological sites in this area, including the Greek theatre of Siracusa the biggest ever built in Sicily and one of the largest in the Greek world or immerse themselves in the beautiful countryside and baroque cities where the world-famous Inspector Montalbano films are shot. For those seeking the perfect panoramas, experience Europe's largest volcano Mount Etna with thrilling and unforgettable views and the ancient splendours of beautiful Taormina.

### **MSC Seaside, one of MSC Cruises' most iconic ships**

*MSC Seaside* rewrote the rule book of cruise ship design, combining indoor and outdoor areas to connect guests with the sea like never before and features generous outdoor spaces with plenty of outdoor deck space and pools. Located as low as Deck 8 is a unique seafront promenade lined with places to eat, drink, shop, swim and sunbathe. The ship features the MSC Yacht Club for those looking for exclusivity and privacy with the facilities of a private club and a 24/7 butler service. This ship is specifically designed for warmer weather and is best enjoyed outdoors, making this the perfect ship for the start of summer in the Mediterranean when the climate is at its best.

*MSC Seaside's* current itinerary has been extended through to the end of July along with *MSC Grandiosa's* current itinerary. *MSC Seaside* and *MSC Grandiosa* itineraries are currently available to residents from Schengen countries and Bulgaria, Croatia, and Romania.<sup>2</sup>

For further information please visit our website.

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<sup>2</sup> Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Greece, Spain, France, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden and Switzerland