



## **MSC CRUISES STRENGTHENS ITS INDUSTRY-LEADING HEALTH & SAFETY PROTOCOL WITH ROLL-OUT OF FLEET-WIDE COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME FOR CREW AS MORE OF ITS SHIPS PREPARE TO RETURN TO SEA**

- **First vaccines given as plan of action starts in earnest for all crew members**
- **Programme to cover all 10 ships already planned to return to sea this Summer, those scheduled to restart in the Caribbean out of U.S. ports as well as the rest of the Company's global fleet**

**Geneva, Switzerland, 1 May 2021** - MSC Cruises announced today that it has started a fleet-wide COVID-19 vaccination programme for all its crew members. This becomes an additional core element of the Company's industry-leading health & safety protocol that has already supported MSC Cruises operations since its first ship returned to service in August last year.

The roll-out saw as its first step the Master of *MSC Bellissima* Captain Giuseppe Maresca and all of his crew completing their vaccinations yesterday.

In this initial phase, MSC Cruises will prioritise crew members on board its 10 ships earmarked for Summer 2021 cruise holidays in the Mediterranean and Northern Europe, those scheduled to restart in the Caribbean out of U.S. ports as well as others that are gearing up for their restart. Crew of the flagship *MSC Virtuosa* will be vaccinated ahead of the ship's maiden voyage from 20 May around the UK from Southampton.

The plan is for all MSC Cruises' crew on board operational vessels, as well as ships preparing to restart in parts of the world the Company has served traditionally, to be vaccinated against COVID-19. It has been developed and will be delivered against with the support of a number of national government authorities, destinations and private sector entities.

**Gianni Onorato, CEO, MSC Cruises, said,** *"As our ships prepare to welcome more and more guests over the coming weeks and months, we are pleased to announce the start of a comprehensive plan of vaccinations for all of our crew. Our aim is of adding a further level of protection for both themselves and the guests they will welcome for their holidays as we lead the way in the industry's restart this summer.*

*"Our health and safety protocol last year spearheaded a safe resumption of cruising in the global industry and our huge vaccination programme for all of our crew further demonstrates our commitment to their wellbeing, of our guests and of the communities that our fleet of ships will visit in the months ahead.*

*“We focused and invested heavily in a health and safety protocol last year and worked relentlessly to engage and gain approval from a range of authorities to return to cruising safely and responsibly. Similarly, we have taken this approach to vaccinations for our crew - plan, prepare and perform.”*

MSC Cruises became the industry’s first line to resume international sailings in August 2020 when the Company’s flagship *MSC Grandiosa* set sail from Genoa for a 7-night voyage in the Mediterranean. The Company has since welcomed on board some 65,000 guests for a safe and relaxing cruise holiday at sea.

The Company’s 10 ships set to serve the Mediterranean and Northern Europe this Summer have confirmed itineraries and ports of call in Italy, Malta, Greece, Croatia, Montenegro, Germany and the UK with plans to add France, Spain and more, as more countries open their borders and relax their international and other travel restrictions.

**ENDS**