



WINTER 21/22: MSC BELLISSIMA TO CONTINUE SAILING IN SAUDI ARABIA AND THE RED SEA INTO THE WINTER SEASON FROM JEDDAH, SAUDI ARABIA

- *The ultimate winter cruise holiday offering discovery, tradition and culture combined with sun, beach and relaxation*
- *MSC Bellissima will offer 7-night cruises calling at four ports in Saudi Arabia, Aqaba/Petra in Jordan and Safaga/Luxor in Egypt, calling three UNESCO World Heritage sites*

Geneva, Switzerland – 15 2021 – MSC Cruises announced today that *MSC Bellissima* will extend her deployment in Saudi Arabia and the Red Sea for the winter 2021/2022 season, following a highly successful inaugural season in the region this summer.

MSC Bellissima and the itineraries in this region have proven very popular since she first commenced sailing there this July out of Jeddah, Saudi Arabia and her continued deployment in the region will further enrich the cruise experience for guests looking for the ultimate winter getaway. *MSC Bellissima* will replace *MSC Magnifica*, which was previously scheduled to serve in the region this winter.

This itinerary for winter 21/22 is brand new for MSC Cruises and is the first of its kind, offering international and local guests unique opportunities to discover Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan by cruise ship - visiting culturally-rich destinations and unspoiled beaches and giving guests the chance to immerse themselves in the incredible history and tradition of the region.

From 30 October 2021 *MSC Bellissima* will offer 7-night cruises from Jeddah, calling at the ports of Ras Al Abyad, Aqaba for Petra in Jordan, Safaga for Luxor in Egypt and then AlWajh and Yanbu, in Saudi Arabia.

MSC Bellissima is one of the newest ships in the MSC Cruises fleet, first launched in 2019, and offers guests a rich and varied onboard experience with innovative and modern facilities including:

- The **MSC Yacht Club** with luxurious accommodations spanning three decks, private facilities and butler service round-the-clock
- **12 dining venues and more than 20 lounges** so that guests will be spoiled for choice including the French specialty restaurant L'Atelier Bistrot, popular American style steakhouse the Butcher's Cut as well as Kaito Teppanyaki and Kaito Sushi bar.
- Acclaimed pastry chef **Jean-Philippe Maury's Chocolate & Café** is dedicated entirely to unique and elegant chocolate creations and desserts and a delight for anyone with a sweet tooth.
- An award-winning family offering with kids' activities and services from partners LEGO and Chicco with a **dedicated family deck area**
- **Two stunning entertainment venues** – the London Theatre and the Carousel Lounge offering original theatre productions and live entertainment
- An 80-metre-long **LED Sky Screen** encompassing a stunning 96-metre-long Mediterranean-style promenade, designed as the social hub of the ship lined with shops, bars and restaurants
- **Comfortable and innovative accommodations to meet every need** demonstrating the way that MSC Cruises puts the guest at the heart of its designs and ship building and with 10 different types of cabin to choose from, there really is something for everyone.

Itinerary Highlights:

- **JEDDAH, SAUDI ARABIA** – Homeporting in this vibrant city that blends history and modernity, guests will have their pick of sites to visit. AlBalad, the old town of Jeddah and a cultural melting-pot, dates back to the 7th century, boasts beautiful buildings and an ancient souk and is one of UNESCO World Heritage sites Saudi Arabia has to offer. Jeddah is also known for its waterfront and modern shopping malls, offering entertainment and recreational activities to its visitors.
- **RAS AL ABYAD, SAUDI ARABIA** – known as “the White Coast” due to the stunning pristine white beaches. Guests can spend the day relaxing and unwinding taking in the stunning seascapes.
- **AQABA FOR PETRA, JORDAN** - This city rests on the Red Sea coast and is a haven for divers and history buffs alike. From snorkelling in the Aqaba Marine Park to Mamluk Castle and the Aqaba Archaeological Museum, this destination has something to satiate everyone’s interests. Aqaba's close proximity to Petra offers guests a chance to travel to this UNESCO World Heritage Site, inhabited since as early 7,000 BC, and discover the rare and unique rock-cut architecture.
- **SAFAGA FOR LUXOR, EGYPT** – A short distance from one of Egypt’s most spectacular destinations, the small city of Safaga is the gateway to Luxor. From the ruins of the Luxor and Karnak temples and the unforgettable Necropolis, where guests will find the Valley of Kings and the Valley of Queens, this is a destination not easily forgotten.
- **AL WAJH, SAUDI ARABIA** – Framed by turquoise seas and 100 km of immaculate beaches on either side, the coastal city of AlWajh once served as one of the region’s central shipping ports. Its abandoned AlBalad old town features ancient Hejazi architecture made from Red Sea coral. It now serves as a coastal gateway to AlUla, home to Hegra (Al-Hijr Archaeological Site) one of Saudi Arabia’s cultural masterpieces and its first UNESCO World Heritage Site. It features more than 110 tombs carved from giant rock formations as well as ancient sites that date back to the 1st millennium BC.
- **YANBU, SAUDI ARABIA** – This major port provides the perfect final stop on this 7-night cruise. The old town of Yanbu, located within walking-distance from the port, dates back 2,500 years, and offers one of the oldest souks, where traders used to come from places far and wide to sell their goods. The city is known as “the diving capital of Saudi Arabia”, and has become an increasingly attractive tourist destination due to its spectacular white sandy shores and lively coral reefs, offering opportunities for snorkelling and water activities in the pristine Saudi Red Sea.

MSC Bellissima’s environmental features

MSC Bellissima is fitted with a large number of environmental features and innovative technology and solutions to minimize her environmental footprint. She is equipped with, amongst others: an exhaust gas cleaning system for cleaner emissions; an advanced wastewater treatment system; smart heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems (HVAC) to recover heat from machinery spaces; and LED lighting and smart devices to significantly save energy. This is all part of MSC Cruises commitment to provide guests with the best holiday experiences at sea in a sustainable way.

MSC Bellissima’s deployment beyond winter 2021/22

At the end of March 2022, *MSC Bellissima* will leave the region and reposition to Japan for her planned cruises out of Yokohama from 21 April.

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