

HISTORIC CRUISE TO MARK 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF TITANIC

The 100th anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic is to be marked in three years time with a once in a lifetime cruise following the ship's original route.

The historic cruise will include a memorial service in the early hours of the morning of April 15, 2012 above the historic vessel in the Atlantic, exactly 100 years after the ship sank beneath the waves.

The Balmoral Cruise liner operated by Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines – whose parent company Harland and Wolff built the Titanic - has been chartered by a specialist travel agency and reservations were opened today, 97 years to the day from when the Titanic was lost.

The cruise liner Balmoral will make the historic journey with 1,309 paying passengers - the same number that sailed on the fateful Titanic voyage. They will enjoy an entirely Titanic themed cruise on a voyage that will be a new chapter in the Titanic story.

On board cruise passengers will be able to mix with fellow enthusiasts, Titanic historians and those with a personal interest in the events of 1912.

The Balmoral will leave Southampton in early April 2012 and sail close to Cherbourg before docking at Cobh, formerly called Queenstown, in Ireland, where the Titanic made its final port of call on April 11, 1912. There passengers can enjoy a Titanic heritage tour.

The cruise will continue following the route of the RMS Titanic and arrive over the spot where the Titanic sank on April 14. Then there will be a special memorial ceremony between 11.40 pm when the ship hit the iceberg and 2.20 am on April 15, exactly 100 years after the great ship sank.

Managing Director of ABTA-bonded Miles Morgan Travel, who has chartered the Fred. Olsen Cruise liner for the historic voyage said: "The Titanic still grips

the imagination of people throughout the world and this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be part of a unique cruise packed with interest for those with a fascination for the Titanic story.

“The whole voyage will be steeped in Titanic history. The food served will match the sumptuous menus on the original voyage; the entertainment will include music and dancing in the style featured in those glorious times and there will be a chance to hear first hand from historians who have studied the Titanic story – it promises to be a truly memorable cruise,” said Mr Morgan.

“We have started taking registrations earlier than planned as there were so many rumours circulating on the internet about plans to mark the anniversary. The fascination for the Titanic is as strong as ever.”

Ironically the Balmoral will have to leave port in Southampton earlier than the Titanic did so that it can reach the spot where she sank on the actual anniversary, as the modern cruise ship can not sail as fast as the Titanic, which at the time was the largest and most luxurious ship afloat.

After the service the cruise continues to Halifax, Nova Scotia where passengers can visit Fairview Lawn Cemetery where 121 Titanic victims are buried, along with Mount Olivet Catholic Cemetery and Hirsch Jewish Cemetery, which also have graves of Titanic victims.

Then finally the cruise continues to New York – the ultimate planned destination of the original voyage – where it is set for an historic welcome.

The 12-night cruise, including flights back to the UK, will cost between £2,595 and £7,995 depending on cabin type. With just 1,309 spaces available these are expected to be snapped up quickly.

The trip is being marketed worldwide with huge interest expected from Titanic enthusiasts on both sides of the Atlantic.

Details of how to book can be found on www.titanicmemorialcruise.co.uk.

ENDS

Titanic – Balmoral Comparison

Specification	Titanic	Balmoral
Built	1909	1988
Cabins	840	738
Passenger's travelling	1309	1309
Crew	401	500
Tonnage	46,328 grt	43,537 grt
Length	269.1 m	218.18 m
Beam Width	28.0 m	28.2m

Speed	21.0 knots	20.0 knots
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