



4 April 2012

## **Titanic Memorial Cruise prepares to set sail on Easter Sunday**

Exactly 1,309 paying passengers from all over the world will set sail from Southampton at 3.00pm BST on Sunday 8 April on a 12-night cruise to commemorate the centenary of the sinking of the Titanic.

There will be the same number of passengers that sailed on the Titanic, part of a meticulous effort to recreate the maiden voyage of arguably the most famous ship of all time - from the food on board to a live band playing music from the era.

People from 28 different countries have booked to travel on the MS Balmoral and retrace the doomed liner's original route.

Relatives of those who lost their lives on the great ship, relatives of survivors, authors, historians and people who are just fascinated by the Titanic story will set sail on the historic one-off event.

The first cruise ever to recreate the fateful voyage has attracted worldwide bookings from places including Australia, Canada, the Caribbean, England, France, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, South America and the USA.

The MS Balmoral is operated by Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, whose parent company Harland and Wolff built the Titanic in Belfast. It has been chartered for the event by ABTA-bonded Miles Morgan Travel, which specialises in tailor-made holidays.

A line up of ten specialist lecturers, some of the world's leading experts on the tragic ship, will be on board including Philip Littlejohn, grandson of Titanic survivor Alexander James Littlejohn and the only Titanic relative to have made the dive to the wreck site.

Philip Littlejohn said: "I am delighted to be part of the cruise to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the maiden voyage of the Titanic. I'm sure my grandfather, a 1st Class Steward on RMS Titanic, would be proud to know his story will be shared with the passengers on this historic cruise. It will be an emotional moment when we are over the wreck site, where I dived in 2001 and where my grandfather left Titanic rowing Lifeboat 13."

Miles Morgan, managing director of Miles Morgan Travel, said: "This cruise has been five years in the making and every step of the way we have sought to make it

authentic to the era and a sympathetic memorial to the passengers and crew who lost their lives.”

The food on board will be based on the dishes served in April 1912. The menu has been created by executive chef on the Balmoral, Dirk Helsing, who has researched the menus that were served on board. A formal dinner on 13 April will have a menu made up entirely of dishes which were served on the Titanic and guests will enjoy a daily Titanic-inspired dish.

One of the most discussed subjects in the Titanic tragedy was the heroic behaviour of the musicians. The five-piece Grupetto from Belgium are a tribute to these musicians and will recreate the soundtrack from the era for passengers.

There will be a special memorial service on 14 April starting at 11.40pm, when the ship hit the iceberg 100 years ago, and 2.20am on 15 April, when the great ship sank beneath the waves.

The Revd Canon Huw Mosford, director of chaplaincy from the Mission to Seafarers, the Titanic Memorial Cruises’s designated charity, will lead the memorial service.

Ends

**Editors’ note:**

**Due to the volume of press enquiries expected in the run up to departure, we politely ask that you to use the resources listed below to answer any questions.**

**PICTURES: More information about the ship, lecturers, itinerary and quotes from passengers travelling can be downloaded from the press centre of the Titanic Memorial Cruise website at:**

**<http://titanicmemorialcruise.co.uk/press.php>**

**High resolution images of the Titanic, the Balmoral and departure event can also be downloaded at <http://titanicmemorialcruise.co.uk/press.php>**

**All passenger quotes and/or interviews on the website can be used in editorial copy.**

**The Mission to Seafarers is the charity partner of the Titanic Memorial Cruise and a donation from every booking has been made to the charity. For more information please visit <http://www.missiontoseafarers.org/>**

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