



PRESS RELEASE

COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF CRUISES, SUSTAINABILITY AND THE RISE OF NEW SHIPOWNERS AND BOATS. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRUISE SUMMIT 2017

The seventh edition of the most important cruise congress in Europe brought together more than 400 attendees in Madrid

Madrid, December 1, 2017, Cruises News Media Group (CNMG). The seventh edition of the International Cruise Summit, held on November 29 and 30 in Madrid, succeeded in outshining previous editions and confirmed the importance that this congress has now acquired within the industry. More than 400 attendees met and learned about an industry which continues to grow.

The inauguration of this new edition was given by **José Llorca Ortega, President at Spanish State Ports**, (who highlighted the importance of the cruise industry for thousands of people working in the ports) together with Manuel Butler, General Director of Turespaña, Marta Blanco, Director General of Tourism of the Community of Madrid, Sabine Schwanz, Director of Travel Trade & Connectivity in Madrid Destino and Virginia López Valiente, CEO of Cruises News Media Group.

The keynote speech was delivered by the current **President of MedCruise, and Commercial Director of Ports of Tenerife, Airam Díaz Pastor**. Díaz stressed the importance of maintaining a continuous dialogue with cruise companies to adapt the ports to their needs, as well as the value of developing marketing strategies to persuade Asian tourists to make cruises in Europe.

The international prestige of the event allowed for the participation of shipping companies in their creation phase, such as **Virgin Voyages**, which gave some details of how they are creating an innovative product. In addition, the **Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection**, which will begin the construction of its first luxury mega yacht in Vigo shipyards soon, defined the style and scale of the ports that they seek. This gave the opportunity to those present at the event of contacting the company direct. Many other companies were represented, such as **MSC Cruises**, which at the same time as inaugurating its new ship in Trieste, announced another order to shipyards, which goes to swell the long list of more than 90 ships under construction between now and 2026.

Virginia López, CEO of Cruises News Media Group, interviewed **Edie Rodríguez**, Americas Brand Chairman and Corporate Special Advisor of the luxury shipping company **Ponant**, who declared her passion for Europe in general and Spain in particular. Rodríguez defined luxury as an experience where all the small details have been pampered, and whose concept has varied ostensibly in the last 20 years. **The real luxury is in small boats visiting boutique ports and exploring exotic destinations** such as the polar regions.

The growing discomfort in some cities due to the supposed tourist overcrowding derived from cruise ships was raised in many of the debates during the congress. Belén Wangüemert, Associate Vice President and Managing Director Eurozone of Royal Caribbean Cruises noted that **less than 1% of tourists visiting Barcelona come from cruise ships**, and they are highly visible



and easily identifiable. The geopolitical conflicts in North Africa and Turkey have increased the pressure on the remaining Mediterranean ports but adequate infrastructures planned with sustainability criteria and a greater variety of itineraries could mitigate this growing burden.

The cruise industry is far ahead of other sectors in **environmental responsibility**. Therefore, many of the ships that will be built in the coming years will use **Liquefied Natural Gas, a clean fuel**, and most of today's large ships have already installed or have plans to install **gas treatment plants**. However, the idea persists that cruises are large pollutants when, according to data provided by Santiago García-Milá, Deputy Director of Strategy and Commercial of the Port of Barcelona, **only 0.23% of the particles of matter that are in the air of the city come from cruises**. There was a general consensus that communication should be improved, both to local communities and to the press, highlighting the benefits of cruises in economic terms, employment, production, and tourism revitalization.

Costa Cruises, the Port of Tarragona and the Tourist Board of the Provincial Council of Tarragona presented their study of success, where, after proper planning, and with the teamwork of both institutions as well as the local community, it was possible to pass **from 3 stopovers in 2013 to 39 stopovers and 51,390 passengers in 2017**, with a forecast for next year of 80,000 passengers.

This seventh edition has allowed us to **continue strengthening the image of Spain as the second European tourist destination for cruise ships** and Madrid as the venue for the main international congresses. In addition, Spain has consolidated its position as a reference in the sector for its infrastructure, variety of destinations with cultural immersions and / or leisure for all tastes. The economic impact of this tourist industry in Spain is more than 1,300 million euros and 28,000 jobs.

This latest edition of the International Cruise Summit has also stood out for the multitude of opportunities that the delegates had to be able to interact with the speakers in the round tables, in the presentations and in the networking opportunities in an environment that improves year after year.

All the information of the **ICS 2017** in: www.internationalcruisesummit.com

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PROMOTIONAL VIDEO: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/wU4NHKNxy20>

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