



## CELESTYAL TO PROMOTE ARABIAN CRUISE PROGRAMME

Regular PSTF supporter **Celestyal** is a leading upper premium cruise operator, with headquarters in Greece and renowned for its immersive experiences in the Mediterranean, and more recently, the Adriatic and Arabian Gulf. At this year's event, the liner will present its fleet transformation and expanded itinerary portfolio, which now includes winter Arabian Gulf programmes and several newly announced ports: Ras Al Khaimah, Aqaba, Jeddah, Muscat, and Sharm El Sheikh. This follows last year's successful expansion into seven new countries and 11 ports. "The Posidonia Sea Tourism Forum is a key meeting point for the cruise and maritime community. Celestyal is pleased to participate once again, share our refreshed brand and itineraries, and connect with key players driving the growth of cruise tourism in Greece and the Mediterranean," said **Chris Theophilides, CEO**, Celestyal. "The event has consistently served as a valuable platform for industry networking, visibility, and market positioning. It has enabled us to strengthen relationships with port authorities, tourism organisations, and fellow cruise operators. In 2025, our goal is to showcase the evolution of our brand, our upgraded fleet, and our expanded deployment strategy targeting a broader global audience," he added.



## TURKISH PORT DELIGHTED TO ATTEND PSTF

**Marmaris Cruise Port** is preparing for its first-ever participation at the Posidonia Sea Tourism Forum where it plans to promote its offerings as a premier cruise destination, strengthen relationships with industry partners and showcase its expertise in turnaround operations. The cruise industry is becoming increasingly important for Marmaris as it continues to attract more interest from cruise operators. Its prime location and naturally protected bay make it an ideal stop for cruise liners, offering both convenience and safety. In 2024, Marmaris Cruise Port successfully completed 27 turnarounds for Marella Discovery, utilizing its brand-new check-in facilities. The large-scale operation handled over 3,500 passengers and an equal volume of luggage, on a weekly basis. This year, the port already has planned calls with major cruise brands. By providing seamless transport solutions for cruise passengers seeking to explore beyond the main ports, the port is well-positioned to capitalize on the industry's growth and enhance the overall travel experience in the region. **Murat Tugay, General Manager**, said: "As newcomers to this prestigious event, we look forward to engaging with industry leaders, exchanging insights, and exploring new opportunities in maritime tourism. As stakeholders in this dynamic industry, we believe in continuously learning from each other and working together to solve problems as well as drive innovation and growth in the cruise industry."

## A BLISS OF A BUSINESS CLASS

Greek regional airline **SKY express** made its maiden PSTF voyage two years ago in Thessaloniki and is now returning to Heraklion for its second consecutive presence at the Forum, where it plans to promote its BLISS Business Class. This new product features priority check-in, enhanced comfort, access to VIP lounges, additional free baggage allowance, private transport to the aircraft, a warm welcome, and a selection of healthy, fresh, high-quality in-flight meals. Furthermore, BLISS Business Class allows passengers to actively contribute to sustainability efforts by selecting their meal preferences in advance, including the option to decline a meal, thereby helping reduce food waste and unnecessary energy consumption. The cruise industry is a key segment for SKY express, which operates the youngest fleet in Greece, with 27 aircraft serving an expanding international network of 22 destinations, including Paris, London, Amsterdam, Rome, Milan, Munich, and Istanbul. "Our participation in the previous Posidonia Sea Tourism Forums has been a highly valuable experience for our team. It allowed us to engage with key cruise line participants and highlight the development of SKY express. We expect our involvement in the Posidonia Sea Tourism Forum 2025 to further strengthen the collaboration initiated at the previous event, while fostering new partnerships and expanding our network with additional stakeholders," said an airline spokesperson.



European Commissioner  
for Sustainable Transport and  
Tourism, Apostolos Tzitzikostas,  
confirms participation and will  
deliver keynote speech

## PIRAEUS PORT STRENGTHENS POSITION AS A LEADING MEDITERRANEAN CRUISE HUB

The cruise sector remains a cornerstone of Piraeus Port's revenue, reinforcing its status as a premier hub in the Mediterranean. To meet the industry's growing demands, large-scale infrastructure projects are underway, including the addition of two new berthing spaces, which will further enhance tourism and solidify Greece's position as a top cruise destination. **Piraeus Port Authority S.A. (PPA)** has been a consistent presence at the Posidonia Sea Tourism Forum (PSTF), using the event to strengthen its reputation as a leading homeport destination and a key player in regional cruise operations. In 2024, Piraeus Port achieved record-breaking numbers, welcoming over 1.7 million cruise passengers, up from 1.5 million in 2023. Homeporting activity continues to rise, with more than 600 of the 810 total cruise ship calls classified as homeport, underscoring the port's critical role as a major embarkation and disembarkation hub. The number of homeporting passengers also exceeded 1 million, a significant increase from 800,000 the previous year. **Su Xudong, CEO** of PPA S.A., expressed his satisfaction with the steady growth of the cruise sector in Piraeus, emphasizing that the port's strategic location, combined with PPA's ongoing investments in infrastructure and services, is yielding impressive results.

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## THESSALY SHOWCASES VOLOS AS A PREMIER CULTURAL CRUISE DESTINATION AT PSTF

The Posidonia Sea Tourism Forum (PSTF) provides a valuable platform for the **Region of Thessaly** to promote the mainland city of Volos as the departure point for a new cultural cruise itinerary that offers passengers a rich cultural and historical experience with visits to destinations such as Meteora, the Ancient Theatre of Larissa, and the Pelion Railway, while also showcasing the region's natural beauty, traditional architecture, and renowned gastronomy. This marks Thessaly's second participation in PSTF, as part of its strategic efforts to position itself as a microcosm of Greece, boasting unique islands (Sporades), stunning beaches, majestic mountains including the iconic Mount Olympus, rich religious heritage, and breathtaking landscapes such as Plastiras Lake, Pertouli, and Tempi. The region also offers modern cities and a deep cultural legacy. "We are participating in Posidonia because we see it as a key opportunity to present our cultural cruise project, 'Argo,' home-ported in Volos, to industry stakeholders. We believe this proposal is a win-win for cruise companies already operating in or looking to enter the Greek market," said **Ioannis Anastasiou, Vice Governor for Digital Governance and Citizen Service, Region of Thessaly**. To support this initiative, significant investments have been made, including the dredging of the port of Volos to ensure it meets international standards for home-porting specialized cruise types. "The cruise industry is a priority for Thessaly, and Volos has all the necessary infrastructure and criteria to become a major hub for cultural cruises," Anastasiou added.



## EDUCATING THE FUTURE OF SEA TOURISM BY STRENGTHENING INDUSTRY TIES

The cruise industry represents an important component of the educational and strategic mission of the **American College of Greece**, particularly through its undergraduate and graduate programmes in tourism and shipping, offered by Deree and Alba, respectively. In its second consecutive PSTF participation, the American College of Greece plans to promote its academic programmes while showcasing how they contribute to the evolving needs of the industry. The esteemed educational institution also aims to explore new opportunities for collaborations that foster talent development, innovation, and sustainability in sea tourism and shipping. **George Kokosalakis, ScD, Executive Director, Centre of Excellence in Shipping, Logistics, & Energy and Associate Professor, School of Business and Economics, Deree**, said: "The Posidonia Sea Tourism Forum unites the maritime and tourism industries to address pressing challenges like sustainability, digitalization and climate resilience. The American College of Greece proudly contributes to this effort through interdisciplinary education and research—from green energy integration to AI-driven logistics—preparing the future leaders to innovate ethically in this rapidly transforming sector. At this year's Forum, we aim to strengthen industry-academia partnerships, share actionable insights on decarbonization, operational efficiency and sustainable tourism practices. Together, we can accelerate the economy's transition to net-zero while fostering inclusive growth, constituting Greece the leading innovator in the areas of sea and tourism sectors."

## ELIME STRENGTHENS GREECE'S POSITION AS A LEADING CRUISE DESTINATION AT PSTF 2025

The cruise industry plays a crucial role for the **Hellenic Ports Association (ELIME)**, as many Greek ports serve as key destinations for cruise lines in the Mediterranean. As ELIME prepares for its second participation in the Posidonia Sea Tourism Forum (PSTF), it aims to leverage valuable networking opportunities, enhance international visibility, and gain insights into the latest trends and innovations in sea tourism. "We look forward to expanding our network, strengthening existing partnerships, and exploring new collaboration opportunities within the cruise industry at PSTF 2025," said **Vasileios Mamalis, Executive Director of ELIME**. As part of its strategic initiatives, ELIME plans to launch an updated version of the GreekCruise.gr portal, which will offer more detailed and user-friendly descriptions of all cruise destinations in Greece, providing an enhanced digital experience for travelers and industry stakeholders alike. The organization continues to capitalize on the cruise sector's growth by supporting port upgrades, improving passenger services, and promoting sustainable practices. These efforts aim to accommodate the rising number of cruise visitors while contributing to Greece's economic growth and tourism development.

## TRAVELWAY TOURISM & SHIPPING REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO PSTF AND THE CRUISE INDUSTRY

**Travelway Tourism & Shipping** remains one of the most dedicated exhibitors at the Posidonia Sea Tourism Forum (PSTF), as it prepares for its eighth participation in the event. The Athens-based cruise travel specialist has been a part of PSTF since its inaugural edition 14 years ago, using the platform to strengthen industry relationships, gain valuable market insights, and explore new business opportunities in the cruise sector. "For the 2025 Forum, we are eager to further expand our network, engage in insightful discussions on industry trends, and showcase how our services continue to evolve to meet the dynamic needs of the sector," said **Spyros Hambas, CEO of Travelway Tourism & Shipping**. Recognizing the cruise industry's vital role in its business, Travelway has built strong strategic partnerships with the world's largest cruise lines. These collaborations have been instrumental in the company's growth, enabling it to capitalize on the industry's expansion, reinforce its market position, and continuously deliver high-quality services and value to both partners and customers.

## IT'S ALL ABOUT CHEMISTRY

**Aphrodite Skincare - Zacharioudakis G. INC**, a producer and distributor of natural skin care products and soaps, will be exhibiting its premium products at the PSTF for the first time, aiming to gain a share of the lucrative beauty and well-being market within the cruise industry. "As first-time participants, we look forward to connecting with key players in the sea tourism industry and exploring collaborations with cruise lines, tour operators, and hotel chains," said **Maria Zacharioudaki, CEO & Chemist**. "Our goal is to introduce Aphrodite Skincare's premium Greek products to international markets and promote wellness experiences rooted in the Cretan tradition of natural beauty care. Over the past few months, we have developed and launched several innovative skincare products inspired by Greek tradition," she added. In the past, the company has successfully collaborated with Celestyal Cruise Lines and is now eager to explore new opportunities and re-establish partnerships - either directly with cruise lines or through suppliers of onboard retail gift shops. The company's formulas are enriched with Cretan virgin olive oil and are available in elegant, travel-size gift sets featuring unique Greek scents - ideal for onboard boutiques or guest amenities. All of these products will be showcased at the Forum.

## The Med: A Compelling Need for New Marquee Ports and Destinations

DAY 1 | Tuesday 6 May 2025

09:00-09:30 Morning coffee - Registration

09:30-10:00 Welcome messages

10:00-10:10 **Opening remarks**

Apostolos Tzitzikostas, EU Commissioner for Sustainable Transport and Tourism

10:10-11:30 **The cruise industry: A culprit or a victim of the over-tourism debate?**

- Speakers:**
- Mehmet Kutman, Founding Shareholder, Chairman and CEO, **Global Ports Holding**
  - Rosana Morillo, Group VP, Government Affairs, **MSC Group**
  - Theodora Riga, President, **MedCruise** and **Corfu Port Authority SA**
  - Chris Theofilides, CEO, **Celestyal**

**Moderator:** Grant Holmes, Global VP, Cruise Solutions, **Inchcape Shipping Services**

11:30-11:50 Networking coffee break for Speakers, Delegates and Press



11:50-13:10 **The future of cruise destination development**

- Speakers:**
- Lars Clasen, CEO, **Cruise Saudi**
  - Marcus Puttich, Director, Destinations, **TUI Cruises**
  - Ana Karina Santini, AVP, International Destination Development, **Royal Caribbean Group**
  - Sandi Weir, Sr. Director, Global Government Relations & Public Affairs, **Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings**

**Moderator:** Grant Holmes, Global VP, Cruise Solutions, **Inchcape Shipping Services**

13:10-14:10 Networking lunch for Speakers, Delegates and Press

14:10-14:20 **Region of Crete presentation**

**Presenter:** Kyriakos Kotsoglou, Vice Governor, Tourism, **Region of Crete**

14:25-15:45 **Small ship cruising: A different perspective**

- Speakers:**
- Spyros Almpertis, VP, Port and Destination Operations, Guest Port Services, **The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection**
  - Aleksander Bienek, VP, Marine Operations, **Star Clippers**
  - Adria Bono, Director, Destination Experiences, **Crystal Cruises**
  - Elisabetta De Nardo, Senior VP Global, Port Relations & Commercial Services, **MSC Cruises-Explora Journeys**
  - Filippos Venetopoulos, CEO, **Variety Cruises**

**Moderator:** Frances Gannon, Editor and co-founder, **CruiseTimes**

15:50-17:00 **Cruising towards sustainability: Partnering with destinations on the net zero pathways**

**Keynote speech:** Maria Deligianni, Regional Director, Eastern Mediterranean, **Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA)**

- Speakers:**
- Ioannis Anastasakis, VG, Climate Change and Urban Mobility, **Region of Crete**
  - Manolis Koutoulakis, Secretary General, Insular Policy and Aegean, **Ministry of Maritime Affairs & Insular Policy**
  - Nikolaos Mavrikos, President & CEO, **Mavrikos Imports S.A. & Panhellenic Association of Ship Suppliers and Exporters**
  - Ioannis Pappas, Director, Med Region & EU Sustainable Destinations, **GSTC**

**Moderator:** Julie Green, Deputy Director General, **Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Europe**

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DAY 2 | Wednesday 7 May 2025

09:15-09:50 Morning coffee - Registration

09:50-10:00 Opening Statements

10:00-11:20 **Cruise ports: Can infrastructure keep up with demand?**

- Speakers:**
- Manolis Alevropoulos, VP, Marine Operations, **Celebrity Cruises | Royal Caribbean Group**
  - Isabelle Côté, International Terminal Operations Management Consultant, **Virgin Voyages**
  - Aziz Güngör, Regional Director, East Med Ports, **Global Ports Holding**
  - Minas Papadakis, CEO, **Heraklion Port Authority SA**
  - Gianluca Suprani, Senior VP, Port Development, **MSC Cruises**

**Moderator:** Nicky Guerrero, Secretary General, **MedCruise**

11:20-11:40 Networking coffee break for Speakers, Delegates and Press



## 11:40-13:00 Cruise lines & destinations: The need for an earnest dialogue [Parallel session](#)

- Speakers:**
- Ligia Balea, Product Manager, Shore Excursions, **Carnival Cruise Line**
  - Dimitris Bekos, Head of Greece, Cyprus, Egypt, and the UAE, **InterCruises**
  - Michele Bosco, Manager, Shore Excursions and Operations, **Princess Cruises**
  - Alessandro Carollo, AVP, Government Relations, **Royal Caribbean Group**
  - Thanos Pallis, Professor of Maritime & Port Economics, Department of Maritime Studies, **University of Piraeus**

**Moderator:** Nicky Guerrero, Secretary General, **MedCruise**

## 11:40-13:20 METAVASEA Port Safety Workshop [Parallel session](#)

**Speakers to be announced**

For more information & to register for this panel, please contact [helmepa@helmepa.gr](mailto:helmepa@helmepa.gr)

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## 13:00-14:00 Networking lunch for Speakers, Delegates and Press

## 14:00-15:15 Coastal & short sea shipping: Evolving towards a greener future [Parallel session](#)

- Speakers:**
- Manolis Koutoulakis, Secretary General for Insular Policy and Aegean, **Ministry of Maritime Affairs & Insular Policy**
  - Panos Dikaio, CEO, **Attica Group**
  - Loukas Sigalas, CEO, **Minoan Lines**
  - Chrysanthi Stefanou, Managing Director, **Golden Star Ferries**

**Moderator:** George Xiradakis, President, **Association of Banking and Financial Executives of Hellenic Shipping**, and Founder & Managing Director, **XRTC BUSINESS CONSULTANTS**

## 14:00-15:15 Yachting today looking at global challenges and its next phase [Parallel session](#)

- Speakers:**
- George Alexandratos, President, **Hellenic Chamber of Shipping**
  - Vasilis Korkidis, President, **Piraeus Chamber of Commerce & Industry**
  - Gina Polemi, President, **Hellenic Committee for Professional Yachting (HCPY)**, and Founder & Managing Director, **Regatta Plus**
  - Stelios Sarafoglou, Captain Class A, **Hellenic Yacht Masters Club**

**Moderator:** Danae Bezantakou, CEO, **Navigator Shipping Consultants** and Founder, **YES Forum**

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## 15:15-16:30 YES to SEApping

- Speakers:**
- George Alexandratos, President, **Hellenic Chamber of Shipping**
  - Olga Bezantakou, VP of Legal, **Navigator Shipping Consultants**, **KEFI SA** and **Filoxenia Hellas**
  - George Chronakis, Marine Personnel Manager, **Eastern Mediterranean Maritime Limited**
  - Maria Deligianni, Regional Director, Eastern Mediterranean, **Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA)**
  - Akis Konstantinidis, HR Manager, **Technomar**
  - George Koumpenas, COO, **Celestyal** and President, **Hellenic Cruise Ship Owners and Associated Members' Union (EEKFN)**
  - Manolis Koutoulakis, Secretary General for Insular Policy and Aegean, **Ministry of Maritime Affairs & Insular Policy**
  - George Mavrogenis, Marine Manager, **Latsco Marine Management**
  - Minas Papadakis, CEO, **Heraklion Port Authority SA**
  - Loukas Sigalas, CEO, **Minoan Lines**
  - Gregory Spourdalakis, Managing Director, **Columbia Shipmanagement Greece**
  - Chrysanthi Stefanou, Managing Director, **Golden Star Ferries**

**Moderator:** Danae Bezantakou, CEO, **Navigator Shipping Consultants** and Founder, **YES Forum**

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## 15:15-16:30 She4Sea Workshop on Women in Blue Economy [Parallel session](#)

**Speakers to be announced**

For more information <https://she4seaproject.eu/>

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## DAY 3 | Thursday 8 May 2025

### 11:00-15:00 Fam trip: An unforgettable journey to Spinalonga island

[Get to know a potential high-yield shore destination](#)

Embark on a captivating journey that includes a guided tour through the unique ruined houses and buildings of the settlement that was, from 1903-1957, Greece's official leper colony. Spi-nalonga gained international recognition as the setting for Victoria Hislop's best-selling novel, "The Island" (2005).

[Gastronomy Experience](#)

Enjoy lunch at the new restaurant, because gastronomy is an essential part of the Hellenic Herit-age experience.

#### Important notes

1. Suggested for itinerary and shore excursion cruise executives.
2. Participation in the fam trip is included in the Speakers', Delegates' and Press' packages.
3. Due to limited seats available, you are kindly requested to register your interest [here](#)

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For more information about the panels please visit the Forum's [website](#)

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