

Windstar Cruises to Début Exclusive Private Events on all 2015 Voyages

*Small luxury cruise line expands 2015 Voyage Collection
to offer new complimentary Private Events*



Seattle, July 9, 2014 – Starting in 2015, all Windstar Cruises’ itineraries will feature a spectacular onshore *Private Event*, created exclusively for Windstar guests. These complimentary events are crafted to give guests an in depth and authentic local experience that compliments their voyage. *Private Events* include activities such as an after-hours tour and dinner under the stars in the magnificent Celsus Library of Ephesus or a private ballet performance in the famed Odessa National Opera and Ballet Theatre.

“We curated these *Private Events* with the local experience in mind. Our product managers toured the regions sampling cuisines, talking to locals, visiting the UNESCO sites to create the best experience possible,” said Hans Birkholz, Windstar Cruises’ chief executive officer. “Our guests gain an even deeper involvement into the local culture.”

Windstar debuted its first exclusive *Private Event* on its *Dreams of Tahiti* voyage in May. The event, included on all 2014 sailings through the South Pacific, features an evening of entertainment with music and a dazzling performance by local fire dancers on a secluded island or “motu.” The evening also includes a dinner of local Tahitian cuisine with tender suckling pig slowly steamed in a traditional “ahima’a” earth oven.

New *Private Events* featured on 2015 voyages:

Asia

- *Phuket: A Feast for the Senses*: Featured on the *Singapore & the Malay Peninsula* voyage, guests will start the evening with a performance by local dancers and a Long Drum Parade, followed by dinner at the award-winning restaurant, Sala Bua (*Pavilion of*

Lotus), overlooking the Andaman Sea, and a private performance of graceful Thai dance.

- *Hoi An: Dreams of Floating Lanterns*: Featured on the *Treasures of Southeast Asia*, *Southeast Asia Unveiled*, and *Southeast Asia Unveiled & Angkor Wat Cruisetour* voyages, guests will start the evening with a private performance of lion dancers, before dining in the beautiful Nam Long restaurant surrounded by lush gardens on the Thu Bon River. Floating lanterns gliding down the river accompanied by traditional music and dancers will add to the enchantment of the evening. Guests will also have the opportunity to take part in interactive workshops of Vietnamese letter drawing, lantern-making, and wood-engraving.

Arabia

- *Luxor: Temples and Tombs on the Nile*: Featured on the *Wonders of Arabia* and *Wonders of Civilization Cruisetour* voyages, guests will travel to Luxor for a two-day tour of the Luxor Temple that includes an evening showing of the Sound and Light display at Karnak Temple, and a one-night hotel stay in the Hilton Luxor. On the second day of the tour, guests will explore the Valley of the Kings – the most important archaeological site in the world that features the tombs of King Tutankhamun and Ramses IV – followed by lunch aboard a *felucca*, a traditional sailboat, as they float down the Nile.

Greek Isles, Turkey & Black Sea

- *Rhodes: The Tantalizing Tastes of Greece*: Featured on the *Greek Isles & Turkish Delights* (Athens to Istanbul) voyage, guests will be wined and dined at the award winning Hatzikelis Fish Taverna in Rhodes that will include a sampling of traditional and modern Greek fare and wines from the local Cair Winery, followed by an exhilarating performance by local musicians and dancers.
- *Kusadasi: Evening in Ephesus*: Featured on the *Greek Isles & Turkish Delights* (Istanbul to Athens) and *Pride of the Aegean* voyages, guests will enjoy an after-hours tour of the magnificent Celsus Library of Ephesus. The evening includes a five-course, white-glove-service dinner in the courtyard of the Library serenaded by a trio from the Aegean Chamber Orchestra.
- *Odessa: Artistry in Architecture and Dance*: Featured on the *Black Sea Tapestry* voyage, guests will enjoy an exclusive ballet performance in the Odessa National Opera and Ballet Theatre – one of the most important landmarks of Eastern Europe designed by Viennese architects F. Felner and H. Helmer. The evening also includes champagne and canapés served during intermission, and a chance sighting of the famed ghost of Pavlova.

Caribbean & Panama Canal

- *Prickly Pear Beach: Island Beach Party*: Featured on the *Yachtsman's Caribbean Voyage* the event includes a day of relaxation and fun on Prickly Pear Beach, a secluded and uninhabited nature refuge in the British Virgin Islands. Activities include

water skiing, kayaking, snorkeling, friendly games of beach volleyball, horseshoes, and bocce ball, and a lunch of freshly grilled local seafood.

- *Mayreau: Private Beach Getaway*: Featured on the *Jewels of the Windward Islands* voyage, this *Private Event* includes a day in paradise on the small island of Mayreau. Guests will enjoy music and a Mixology Class to learn how to make favorite local drinks, in addition to an amazing lunch of fresh local food.
- *St. Lucia: Getaway in Paradise*: Featured on the *Classic Caribbean* voyage, guests will spend a day of fun and adventure on a secluded beach on Pigeon Island, where the bar is open and the steel drums are playing. Guests can take part in an escorted snorkeling excursion or a number of water sports. After working up an appetite, Windstar chefs will serve a dinner of local fresh fish, lobster, and the uniquely Caribbean specialty, conch.
- *Isla de Coiba: Tropical Beach Delights*: Featured on the *Passage Through Panama* voyage, guests will have opportunity to explore the Isla de Coiba, an UNESCO World Heritage Site, accessed only by special permit. Snorkel or take a guided hiking tour through the island's untouched natural beauty. The day will be accompanied by live music, cocktails, and a beachside lunch.

Italy

- *Messina: Taste of Sicily*: Featured on the *Classic Italy & Dalmatian Coast* voyage, the event begins with a wine tasting and tour of Vinicola Benanti, a family-run winery, followed by lunch featuring traditional Sicilian food paired with a selection of the family's wines.
- *Monte Carlo: Glitter & Games*: Featured on the *Yachting the Riviera, Rivera Enchantment, and Glitter & Glam of the Riveras* voyages, guests will enjoy red carpet treatment during an on deck cocktail party set against the glittering backdrop of Monte Carlo. After dinner and cocktails on board, guests will enjoy a champagne and dessert reception in the legendary Grand Casino, followed by an evening of gaming in the city.
- *Agrigento: Beauty Among the Ruins*: Featured on the *Sicilian Splendors* voyage, guests will enjoy an exclusive tour through the Valley of Temples – one of the most important archaeological sites in the world that features ancient temples and edifices built between 510 and 430 B.C. The day will include lunch at the five-star Hotel Villa Athena.

Mediterranean

- *Giardini Naxos: Taste of Sicily*: Featured on the *Enchanting Greece & the Amalfi Coast* voyage, the event begins with a wine tasting and tour of Vinicola Benanti, a family-run winery, followed by lunch featuring traditional Sicilian food paired with a selection of the family's wines.
- *Mallorca: Bolero, Fandango, and Other Works of Art*: Featured on the *Islands of the West Med and Spanish Serenade* voyages, this event features a private guided tour through the March Palace, which features a renowned works of art collection. At the end of the tour, guests will enjoy tapas on the terrace and a performance by 30 local artists featuring Mallorcan folk dances such as the bolero, the jack, the fandango, and the copeo.

- *Cádiz: Best of Breed – Andalusian Horses and Sherry*: Featured on the *Splendors of Southern Spain* voyage, this event starts with a tour and sherry tasting at the internationally recognized González Byass Bodega. The day also includes a spectacular equestrian ballet performed at the Royal Andalusian School of Equestrian Art Foundation, followed by tapas and a sherry tasting.
- *Marrakech: Textures and Treasures*: Featured on the *Casablanca & the Canary Islands* voyage, this event starts with a tour of the famed Majorelle Gardens, followed by a private lunch served in the heart of the exclusive Palm Groves neighborhood of Marrakech. Guests will go on to visit the holy site of Ben Youssef Madrasa – a stunning example of 16th century Moorish architecture – followed by treasure hunting in Souk Smarine. Guests will end the day in Djemaa el Fna square, where fireeaters, mime artists, snake charmers, and street musicians perform.
- *Butrint: Bronze Age to Venetians*: Featured on the *Venetian Passageways* voyage guests will enjoy a day of exploration in Butrint, which features some of the world’s most significant and beautiful Roman ruins. The day will also include a presentation by the former director and founder of Butrint National Park, Auron Tare, followed by a cocktail reception.

Northern Europe

- *St. Petersburg: Private Reception at the Catherine Palace*: Featured on the *Baltic Delights* voyage, this event includes an exclusive tour through the Palace led by guides and followed by a champagne reception in the Throne Room, accompanied by “Catherine the Great” herself who will take part in a Farewell Dance in the Courtyard before departing in her royal carriage.
- *Bordeaux: A Perfect Blend*: Featured on the *Culinary & Wine Delights of Spain & France* voyage guests will enjoy a wine tasting and estate tour of the Chateau Giscours. The tour includes a French cooking class at the Halle Suzanne followed by dinner accompanied by a quartet of classical musicians.
- *Porto: Songs and Spirits of Portugal*: Featured on the *Gems of France & Iberia* and *Best of Europe's West Coast* voyages this event includes a guided tour through the historic center of Porto, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the Ferreira Cellars, where guests will enjoy a glass of port accompanied by a *fado* performance by the national known singer, Joana Costa.
- *Nærøfjord: Dramatic Passage*: Featured in the *Lands of the Midnight Sun* voyage, this event includes a sailing tour of the cascading waterfalls and stunning beauty of Nærøfjord – a UNESCO World Heritage Site rated by the National Geographic Society as the world's number one natural heritage site in 2006. The tour will include a picnic of regional delicacies as guests enjoy the vivid scenery.
- *Ijmuiden: Swords and Dungeons*: Featured on the *Northern Europe Wonderlands* voyage, this event includes a guided tour through Forteiland, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one-of-a-kind fortress built half underground near Amsterdam. Following the day of exploration, guests will also enjoy a candlelit tapas dinner in the Koepelzaal (Dome Hall).

- *Copenhagen: An Evening with Princes and the Gods*: Featured on the *Spectacular Scandinavia* and *Scandinavian Tapestry* voyages, this event includes a canal cruise through Copenhagen and a tour through The National Museum, closed to the public for Windstar's exclusive use. The tour will also feature a classic Danish smorgasbord paired with local beverages.
- *SAIL Amsterdam: Parade Of Tall Ships*: Featured on the *Windmills & Tall Sails* voyage, guests will have deck-side seats to one of the world's largest sailing parades on board *Wind Surf*. Enjoy a lunch and cocktails as the yacht sails with hundreds of sailing heritage craft, modern and naval ships, and historical replicas during SAIL Amsterdam.
- *Culloden: Fields of the Bonnie Prince*: Featured on the *Gaelic Explorers* voyage, guests will enjoy canapés and champagne at Fort George, during an exclusive after-hours tour with expert guides who will take guests through the history of Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Highlanders loss to the Duke of Cumberland during the Battle On The Moor. The event will include the traditional military and musical performance, Beating Retreat, complete with pipes, drums, and marches.

About Windstar Cruises

Windstar Cruises operates a fleet of small luxury cruise ships known for its intimate yacht style experience and unique voyages to the world's best small ports and hidden harbors. Its three recently renovated sailing yachts carry just 148 to 310 guests and cruise to 50 nations, calling at 150 ports throughout Europe, the South Pacific, the Caribbean, and Central America. In May of 2014, Windstar launched *Star Pride*, the first of three newly acquired power yachts. In May of 2015 the company will launch *Star Breeze* and *Star Legend*. The power yachts, with a capacity of 212 guests each, will double the size of Windstar's fleet, making the company the market leader in small ship cruising with 300 or fewer passengers, with a total of 1,242 berths. The additional capacity will open up new itineraries such as voyages to Southeast Asia, Arabia, Iceland, and beyond. Windstar was recently listed on *Condé Nast Traveler's* prestigious Gold List, coming in as the #3 cruise line in the world.

For more information including rates and itineraries, contact a travel professional or call Windstar at 800-258-7245. Visit Windstar Cruises online at WindstarCruises.com or Blog.WindstarCruises.com. Windstar Cruises can also be followed on Windstar's Facebook and Twitter fan pages. Windstar Cruises is part of Xanterra Parks & Resorts, a diversified global travel and hospitality company.

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