

Royal Caribbean International Takes Delivery of Independence of the Seas

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Third in Famed Freedom Class of Ships, Independence is the First to Sail in Europe

Royal Caribbean International took delivery of its newest innovative ship - Independence of the Seas - during a ceremony at Aker Yards in Turku, Finland, today. Just days away from her debut in Europe, Independence of the Seas, is the third of the line's Freedom class of ships and will be the largest cruise ship ever to be home-ported in Europe, when she sails out of Southampton, United Kingdom, for her inaugural season. Independence shares the title of world's largest and most innovative cruise ship with sister-ships Freedom of the Seas and Liberty of the Seas, which launched in the U.S. in May 2006 and 2007 respectively, and which offer Caribbean cruises from Miami, Florida.

In the first nationwide search of its kind in the United Kingdom, Royal Caribbean is bestowing the title of Godmother of Independence of the Seas to an ordinary woman who has done extraordinary things to further the well being of youth in her community. The search was conducted with the cruise line's charity partner and British five-time Olympic gold medalist, Sir Steve Redgrave. The four Godmother finalists - who were nominated by peers or family members - joined Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. chairman and CEO, Richard Fain at Aker Yards, to welcome Independence into service. The four finalists are Barbara Natasegra, Elizabeth Hill, Madeleine Henry and Sue Stones. The Godmother, who will be announced on April 18, will be selected by a distinguished panel of judges, including Sir Steve Redgrave, Royal Caribbean executives and guest judges. She will have the honor of participating in the inaugural celebrations and official naming ceremony in Southampton on April 30.

"We are delighted to welcome Independence of the Seas to our fleet and to introduce her to vacationers throughout the United Kingdom and Europe," said Adam Goldstein, president and CEO, Royal Caribbean International. "Positioning one of our largest and newest ships in Southampton reaffirms Royal Caribbean's strong commitment to the region and will provide the opportunity for more European guests to experience the distinctive and award-winning vacation our brand has become recognized for throughout the world."

Following a series of preview sailings in Oslo, Norway and Southampton, Independence will embark on her maiden voyage on May 2. Through the summer of 2008, she will sail 14-night 'Mediterranean Treasures' and 'Italian Mediterranean' itineraries round-trip from Southampton. Ports of call include Gibraltar., Barcelona, Malaga, Vigo and Seville, Spain, Nice and Cannes/Monte Carlo, France, Florence/Pisa and Sardinia, Italy, and Lisbon, Portugal.

Guests also can enjoy two, four-night getaways from Southampton to Cork, Ireland and St. Peter Port, Channel Islands. Three, 11-night Canary Islands itineraries, also roundtrip from Southampton, will close the fall season, calling on Madeira, Portugal, Tenerife, Las Palmas and Lanzarote, Canary Islands, and Vigo, Spain. Independence then heads to the United States to begin a series of warm weather Eastern and Western Caribbean sailings from Fort Lauderdale, Florida. starting in November 2008.

At 160,000 GRT and a capacity of 3,634 guests, Independence of the Seas will feature all of the industry-first amenities which are trademarks of the Freedom-class ships: a FlowRider surf simulator, the H2O Zone water park with its interactive sculpture garden for families, cantilevered whirlpools suspended 112 ft. above the ocean in the adults-only Solarium, a full-size boxing ring and a 14-person family suite. Unlike her sister-ships, all pools and the water park on Independence will be heated.

Independence also will feature some of the other distinctive offerings the global cruise line is known for including, an ice-skating rink, a rock-climbing wall, an award-winning children's program, fine to casual dining venues, Broadway-style entertainment and the Royal Promenade - an entertainment boulevard stretching the length of the ship with its shops, restaurants, bars and lounges, which provides guests with an endless variety of choices and experiences to suit their taste and preference.

Royal Caribbean International is a global cruise brand with 21 ships currently in service and two under construction. The line also offers unique cruisetour vacations in Alaska, Asia, Australia, Canada, Europe, South America and New Zealand.

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