

MSC Cruises Places Two Ship Orders for the Most Modern Fleet in the World

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MSC Meraviglia, MSC Favolosa To Be Delivered By 2012

MSC Cruises has announced the extraordinary expansion of its fleet with the order of two additional ships from the Aker Yards France at St. Nazaire.

The announcement was made today in Milan by Pierfrancesco Vago, CEO of MSC Cruises worldwide, and Domenico Pellegrino, MSC Cruises General Manager, and Jacques Hardelay, General Manager of Aker Yards France.

The new ships -- due for delivery in 2011 and 2012 -- will be named MSC Meraviglia ("marvelous/amazing") and MSC Favolosa ("fabulous") and will be the fifth and sixth ships in the "Musica" class, at 93,000 tons, 1,275 staterooms and capacity of 2,550 passengers, double occupancy.

"I can say with pride that MSC Cruises has the most modern fleet in the world," declared Vago. "MSC Meraviglia and MSC Favolosa carry us forward to 2012, with more than 1.4 million guests to whom we can offer a product that has been designed, engineered and presented as only MSC Cruises knows how. We now play a key role on the global market, successfully acting as an ambassador for Italian style worldwide."

MSC Meraviglia and MSC Favolosa will bring the fleet total to 14 ships, completing a development plan that has allowed the company to achieve these records:

the most modern fleet in the world: most ships are less than 5 years old,

an investment of 5.5 billion Euros between 2003 and 2009 for the construction of 10 new generation ships, subdivided into three classes: Lirica class (60,000 tons), Musica class (93,000 tons), Fantasia class (133,500 tons),

the largest cruise company with entirely European capital,

two super-flagships -- MSC Fantasia and MSC Splendida, at 133,500 tons -- the largest ships built for a European shipping company,

the first company to receive the '6 Golden Pearls' from the Bureau Veritas

"The new orders are the result of a careful evaluation of trends in the cruise industry in recent years," declared Pellegrino. "Over the first months of 2008, the cruise market grew by 13% while, in the same period, the company recorded an increase equal to 32% in terms of passengers. This result was achieved also thanks to the confidence the sales channel has been showing us year after year. Based on these figures, we foresee a rosy future for both the cruise sector and MSC Cruises."

Construction will start on MSC Meraviglia and MSC Favolosa under the guidance of the Korean STX Shipbuilding at the Aker Yards France.

"The strong relationship which already exists between MSC Cruises and Aker Yards has been reinforced by this contract. We look forward to continuing our innovative cooperation with MSC Cruises in order to offer unique cruise experiences to MSC Cruises' passengers. We are ready and happy to take up this new challenge," said Hardelay.

MSC Cruises, the fastest growing cruise line with the youngest fleet, has nine ships: MSC Poesia, MSC Orchestra, MSC Musica, MSC Sinfonia, MSC Opera, MSC Armonia, MSC Lirica, MSC Melody, MSC Rhapsody, cruising in the Mediterranean year round and seasonally in Northern Europe, Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean, South America, Indian Ocean and South Africa. In fall 2008 and spring 2009, MSC Fantasia and MSC Splendida, will be launched. In fall 2009, MSC Magnifica, fourth in the "Musica" class, will enter service, followed by sister ships MSC Meraviglia (2011) and MSC Favolosa (2012). By the end of 2012, MSC Cruises, with 12 vessels, will have the most modern fleet in the world.

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