

## Holland America Line Launches Explorations Team

2008-10-03

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With today's traveler looking for more enriching experiences and activities, Holland America Line has broadened its onboard programming with the new Explorations Team. As part of the premium line's ongoing Signature of Excellence initiative, the Explorations Team will be comprised of event staff with specific, niche expertise ranging from technology to travel who will offer guests a menu of 'edutainment' programs

The Holland America Line Explorations Team will be a cohesive team dedicated to enhancing the overall cruise experience and includes an onboard party planner, a travel guide, a "techspert" and dance directors. On cruises lasting 12 days or more, a book club leader will also join the team.

"People learn through experience and our guests are looking for programs, events and activities they can personally connect with," said Richard D. Meadows, CTC, executive vice president, marketing, sales and guest programs. "Our goal is not only to entertain guests but to offer them the opportunity to learn a new skill or discover something about a new port or country, the choice is theirs, and the Explorations Team is in place to facilitate that choice."

The onboard party planner will schedule, implement and host events in the Culinary Arts Center, significantly expanding the innovative program which already brings more than 70 culinary experts on board each year for cooking demonstrations and seminars. The line has invested more than \$14 million in the professional show kitchens found on each ship and will use the space for more activities such as wine tasting, craft classes, floral arranging, and table and lifestyle presentations such as creating the line's beloved towel animals.

The travel guide will host lectures and be a one-stop source for information on the various ports of call. A destination expert, the travel guide will be available throughout the cruise to interact with guests on a one-on-one basis, answer questions, and give presentations on the destination's history, culture and geography. On Grand Voyages and on ms Prinsendam, rotating guest speakers fill the role of travel guide.

The "techspert" will be on hand to teach guests how to take advantage of technology, whether helping guests make the most of their vacation photos, arranging a digital scrapbook, blogging, creating a slideshow or editing a movie. Classes and personal workshops will be available throughout the cruise. Novices can learn about Web 2.0 and how to work with digital photos. Those with more experience will enjoy the opportunity to learn new shortcuts and techniques.

Dance directors show guests how to dance the night away. Classes are available throughout each cruise. Whether teaching line dancing in the Crow's Nest or ballroom dancing in the Ocean Bar, the dance instructors will ensure guests of all experience levels enjoy themselves while learning new steps. After class, guests will find dance events on the ship's activity schedule where they may show off their new moves.

On cruises lasting 12 or more days, a book club leader will host lively book discussions in the Explorations Cafe powered by the New York Times. Book titles will be posted online before the cruise so guests interested in joining the discussion will have time to read the chosen book. The book club leader will plan and facilitate two to three discussions for each book. Books chosen will relate to the sailing destination whether by author or topic. For example, on an Australian itinerary the book may be "In a Sunburned Country" by Bill Bryson or in Asia, "Saving Fish from Drowning: A Novel by Amy Tan."

With the addition of this new team of experts, Holland America Line guests now will have even more memories to take home from their cruise plus the personal experiences that have enriched their lives to share with family and friends. The Holland America Line Explorations Team will be implemented fleet-wide.

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