



Norwegian Pearl is designed for NCL's Freestyle Cruising concept.

# New vessels for 2007

A number of cruise ships will be entering service this year with all of the major lines christening new builds. *World Cruise Industry Review* looks at what the industry can expect over the coming months.

## Norwegian Pearl – Norwegian Cruise Line

Although christened in December 2006, NCL's *Norwegian Pearl* will make its debut in 2007. *Norwegian Pearl* is the third in the Jewel class of ships for NCL, joining sister ships *Norwegian Jewel* and *Pride of Hawaii*. *Pearl* carries 2,380 passengers and weighs 93,000 tonnes. Designed for NCL's Freestyle Cruising concept, it is the first ship to feature a bowling alley.

## Carnival Freedom – Carnival Cruise Lines

*Carnival Freedom* will be launched in March, in Venice, Italy. It is the fifth of the Conquest-class ships for Carnival, and will be joining *Conquest*, *Valor*, *Glory* and *Liberty* in the Carnival fleet. At 110,000 tonnes and carrying 2,974 passengers, *Carnival Freedom* is too large to pass through the Panama Canal. It will sail the Mediterranean in the spring, summer and autumn of 2007 before crossing the Atlantic to the Caribbean for the winter. It will return to the Mediterranean in 2008.

## Royal Princess – Princess Cruises

The 710-passenger *Royal Princess* was first launched in 2001 by Renaissance Cruises as the *R8*. After Renaissance ceased operations, the ship sailed as the *Minerva II* for Swan Hellenic. In March 2006, Carnival Corporation, the parent company of both Swan Hellenic and Princess, announced that *Minerva II* would move to Princess and sail as the *Royal Princess*. In April, the vessel will enter service for Princess, and will sail five new Mediterranean itineraries in late 2007.

## Emerald Princess – Princess Cruises

The 116,000-tonne *Emerald Princess* will join the Princess fleet as a new build

and member of the Grand class of ships, carrying from 2,600 to 3,100 passengers. *Emerald Princess* will embark on its first cruise in April from Venice, Italy, and will be christened along with the *Royal Princess* in Santorini, Greece, in May. *Emerald* will sail the Mediterranean until autumn 2007, when it will head to the Caribbean for the 2007/08 winter season.

## Liberty of the Seas – RCI

The largest cruise ship afloat, *Freedom of the Seas*, will have some competition in May 2007 when *Liberty of the Seas* joins the RCI fleet. At 160,000 tonnes and carrying 3,600 passengers, *Liberty* is the same size as *Freedom* and offers the same amenities. It will sail the eastern and western Caribbean on seven-day cruises.

## MS Fram – Norwegian Coastal Voyage

The 12,700-tonnes 318-passenger *MS Fram* is scheduled for its maiden voyage in April 2007. The naming ceremony will take place in Oslo in May. *Fram* is an expedition ship sailing the North Atlantic to Greenland and Iceland in the summer, and Antarctica in the winter. *Fram* will have a pole-to-pole world cruise in its first season, starting in Greenland in September, ending in Antarctica 66 days later.

## Celebrity Journey – Celebrity Cruises

Princess is not the only cruise line adding one of the former R-class ships to its fleet in 2007. The 30,000-tonne, 710-passenger *Celebrity Journey* (originally the *R6*) joins the Celebrity fleet in May 2007. Recently, *Celebrity Journey* sailed as the *Blue Dream of Pulmantur*, which was acquired by Celebrity's parent company RCI in late

2006. *Journey* will sail a series of Bermuda cruises from Cape Liberty in New Jersey, US, in the summer and autumn of 2007 before repositioning to South America and Antarctica for the winter of 2007-08.

## Costa Serena – Costa Cruises

The 112,000-tonne, 3,000-passenger *Costa Serena* will be the second ship in the Concordia class to join the Costa fleet when it is christened in May 2007. Its Samsara Spa will spread over two decks and all Samsara suites will have direct access to the spa. *Serena* will sail the Mediterranean during 2007.

## Norwegian Gem – NCL

NCL will add another vessel to its Jewel class, the 93,000-tonne *Norwegian Gem*, which will carry 2,380 passengers. *Gem* will also feature a bowling alley, NCL's Freestyle Dining range of restaurants as well as other amenities found on its sister ships. The *Norwegian Gem* joins the NCL fleet in October 2007 in the Mediterranean, cruising there before moving on to New York in early December 2007.

## Queen Victoria – Cunard Line

The 90,000-tonne, 2,000-passenger *Queen Victoria* is the last new ship of 2007, and will be christened in Southampton, UK, on December 2007. *Queen Victoria* is similar to the Holland America Line Vista-class vessels. Cunard plans some special touches to *Victoria*, including private viewing boxes in the Royal Court Theatre, a fresco dining for Grill guests, Cunard's a floating museum display of Cunard memorabilia, and a two-storey library with nearly 6,000 books. The *Queen Victoria* can sail the Panama Canal, and will embark on its first world cruise in January 2008. [we](#)