

GETTING IN TOUCH WITH THE MUSE

Silversea's luxury vessel offers new look, stylish features, plus butler service



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Ports + Bows

The launch of a new ship is always a special occasion, but for ultra-luxury line Silversea (cruise.center/silversea/), the debut of its newest vessel in eight years rolls out so many new features that it's tough to keep track of them all.

The 40,700 ton, 596-guest Silver Muse is the largest ship ever built for the Monaco-based cruise line that specializes in luxury and luxury expedition voyages around the globe. Silversea's last ship to debut was the 540-guest Silver Spirit, which entered service in the fall of 2009.

And while Silver Muse may bear a striking similarity to its older fleetmate, enough substantial changes have been added to Silver Muse to make it one of the line's most unique and original creations yet.

When I boarded the ship in the Italian port of Genoa — just hours after it was handed over to Silversea from the Fincantieri shipyard — the first thing that struck me was how bright, airy and spacious Silver Muse is. Even fully loaded (every suite was filled for this pre-inaugural "shakedown" cruise), crowding was never an issue anywhere. Silversea's ships have always been known for their spaciousness — a true hallmark of luxury — but Silver Muse takes things to

a new level despite its increased passenger capacity.

You'll also find a new look for Silversea aboard Silver Muse. Lighter colours prevail throughout, and public rooms have a uniformity in their decor that favours soft earth tones as opposed to the traditional, heavily saturated nautical hues of ships past.

This is most apparent in Dolce Vita, Silversea's new, prominent lounge on Deck 5. With its plush chairs and couches and numerous tables, this stylish area is the first thing embarking guests will first encounter when they step aboard. It's one of the largest rooms on any Silversea ship, reminiscent of a classically grand Italian hotel gone to sea.

Suites were also given a brand-new look that's particularly fetching. Gone are the dark wood accents and saturated red carpeting, replaced instead with a colour palette of creams, greys and soft earth tones. Lighting fixtures are more modern, and balconies are much larger than on the line's previous ships.

Every single guest aboard Silversea has their suite serviced by a butler and an attendant, who take exceptional care of you. This isn't as stuffy as it sounds: These folks are so friendly and genuine that many past guests (including yours truly) have become friends with them, and the other crew members. Your butler can help you make dinner reservations, unpack your luggage, or help you with anything you might need.

Those who like the really, really good life will be pleased to know that Silver Muse has more top-of-the-line suites than any other ship in the fleet. This includes



Silversea's newest ultra-luxury ship, Silver Muse, is its largest — and most unique — to date. **PORTS AND BOWS**

the popular Silver Suites that measure 786 square feet apiece and feature separate living and sleeping areas, as well as a walk-in closet and a marble-clad bathroom complete with jetted tub and a standalone shower.

Every guest has always been spoiled on Silversea, with nine different pillow options and a choice of Bvlgari, Ferragamo and hypo-allergenic toiletries. But guests who book the top-of-the-line Royal, Grand and Owner's Suites on Silver Muse can now choose from a selection of five different Bvlgari toiletries and five scented bath sachets for the ultimate in relaxation.

Other new features abound, including a fantastic new arts

cafe that blends books with coffee and light bites throughout the day. It ended up being my favourite location to have a morning cappuccino, either sitting inside in the unusually funky space or outside, on the expansive seating area looking over the ship's stern.

Silver Muse has eight dining options, including two new restaurants (Indochine and Atlantide) that take the place of the more traditional main dining room. In my four days on board, I didn't miss the main dining room, and much preferred the unique menus found in each venue.

After a four-day tease, I said farewell to Silver Muse in Barcelona. If you want to hop aboard,

you can catch it in the Mediterranean before it sails across the Atlantic later this year, bound for the east coast of Canada, the United States and the Caribbean.

Happy cruising.

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