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## SUMMER'S SWEET IN SACRAMENTO

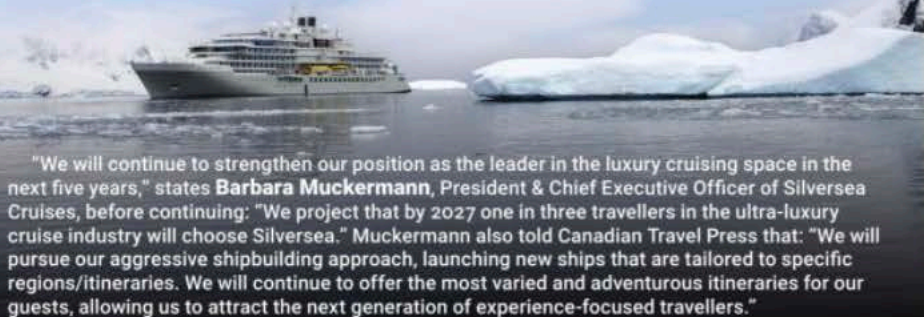


SACRAMENTO  
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT



# Silversea Cruises:

## Transforming the luxury and expedition cruise space



"We will continue to strengthen our position as the leader in the luxury cruising space in the next five years," states **Barbara Muckermann**, President & Chief Executive Officer of Silversea Cruises, before continuing: "We project that by 2027 one in three travellers in the ultra-luxury cruise industry will choose Silversea." Muckermann also told Canadian Travel Press that: "We will pursue our aggressive shipbuilding approach, launching new ships that are tailored to specific regions/itineraries. We will continue to offer the most varied and adventurous itineraries for our guests, allowing us to attract the next generation of experience-focused travellers."

*I wanted to start by asking you for a state of the union of cruising. Has the pandemic changed the industry? In what ways? Where is the industry at now, in terms of its recovery?*

The industry is doing extremely well. We learned a great deal throughout the pandemic – most notably that our guests' passion for travel, discovery, and self-enrichment cannot be quashed. Travellers were ready to get back into the world as soon as it reopened; they spent the downtime planning, preparing for their next voyage, and dreaming of exotic ports of call. We developed a renewed appreciation for travel. This led to where we are now with incredible demand, full ships, and many advance bookings well into 2024 and 2025.

As for Silversea, we learned that our guests are extremely loyal and care deeply about our level of personal service. They didn't just want to travel; they wanted to travel with us. As we expected, many of our Venetian Society members quickly returned to our ships, but we were also delighted to welcome so many new-to-cruise and new-to-brand guests on board following the pandemic – in regions around the world.

In terms of recovery, we are very much back in business and, having welcomed four new ships to the fleet in the last three years with another two to come, our offering is stronger than ever.

*The natural follow-up seems to be where does Silversea Cruises fit in all of this? I suppose, the*

*question is, what's its unique selling proposition? How does it set itself apart from its competition?*

Silversea is the world leader in the luxury and expedition cruise segments. We offer our guests the luxury of choice, sailing to over 900 destinations across all seven continents – more than any other cruise line. Our voyages appeal to curious travellers – baby boomers, increasingly – who collect memories, not possessions, and our destination experts craft unique experiences that immerse travellers deep into the world.

We often say that our ships are outposts of luxury and we operate safaris at sea; they provide the same level of comfort as the very best hotels ashore, but do so in the world's most remarkable, and often remote, destinations.

Our voyages are door-to-door, everything is included, from sustainable caviar to shore excursions, and our service is unparalleled, with butlers for every suite and a crew-to-guest ratio of nearly 1:1, meaning our guests need only focus on enjoying the moment. For us, this is true luxury.

Strengthening our brand proposition, we introduced the S.A.L.T. program aboard our newer

ships to immerse guests even deeper into each destination, taking the lenses of food and drink to enable travellers to get under the skin of each region's culture. Onboard select ships, we have the S.A.L.T. Lab, which lets our guests get hands-on with regional ingredients, learning from expert local chefs. In the S.A.L.T. Kitchen, the menu changes daily and includes local dishes. The S.A.L.T. Bar serves drinks inspired by local flavours. This is truly unprecedented within the industry and it demonstrates our commitment to delivering authentic experiences.

Our Otium program, meanwhile, is the most indulgent wellness program at sea, and extends guests' wellness journey throughout the ship. Champagne in a Roman-inspired spa, in-suite movie nights with truffle popcorn, and delicious hot chocolate on the balcony while admiring a glacier – these are my idea of comfort!



*Luxury. Ultra-Luxury. Expedition. I'm hoping that you can define these terms for my travel advisor readers. What is luxury cruising; ultra-luxury cruising; and expedition cruising – or at least what do these terms mean for Silversea Cruises?*

When it comes to cruise travel, the terms 'luxury' and 'ultra-luxury' take on different meanings to different people. Put simply, we exist to take travellers closer to the

authentic beauty of the world in comfort. For us, luxury means choice – from 900+ destinations, more than any other cruise line, to a pillow menu. It means personalized service. It means a complete door-to-door experience and an all-inclusive product. But it also means authenticity and truly understanding a culture. Interacting with locals and experiencing life their way – from drinking regionally produced rosé with locals in Portugal to sitting on the floor in Japan for a traditional tea ceremony.

An extension of our unique take on luxury, our expedition product broadens options for guests, providing complete immersion into some of the world's most remote destinations – from Antarctica to the Galapagos Islands. Education and enrichment lies at the heart of our expedition offering: our expedition ships carry industry-leading teams of naturalists, historians, geologists,

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marine biologists, and more. They form strong connections between travellers and destinations, while our industry-leading crew ensures comfort – in true Silversea style. Sipping champagne in New York is not necessarily luxurious, but doing so in Antarctica aboard Silver Endeavour – after flying directly to the White Continent on our fly-cruise product – most definitely is.

**Hopefully, that leads to asking you to talk about how the Silversea brand has evolved. Can you take CTP's travel advisor readers through how the brand has changed over the years?** I believe that you've been involved in the launch of several new concepts that demonstrate this brand evolution. Silversea pioneered the ultra-luxury, all-inclusive cruise concept when it launched in 1994 and has since evolved in line with the changing needs of our guests. We introduced the concept of ultra-luxury expeditions in 2008 too, responding to a growing interest in experiential travel and a demand for remote destinations.

In 2018, we became part of Royal Caribbean Group, which has given us financial support and the synergies we needed to grow the brand, and we continue to strengthen our leadership in the ultra-luxury and expedition cruise segments. We are adding new ships every year, growing at an unprecedented pace.

In summer 2023, we will introduce Silver Nova, which represents the latest iteration of Silversea luxury. The first of two in the Nova class, she will be among the most sustainable ships ever launched and will evolve the travel experience entirely for our guests, with some of the most spacious accommodations at sea and the broadest array of bars, restaurants and lounges in the industry.

**As a follow up ... has the pandemic changed the cruise traveller? How? Are they looking for something different from a cruise today? How is Silversea Cruises responding to the changing demands/needs of consumers?**

I don't think cruise travellers have changed per se. Our guests have always loved cruising and they still do. What has changed is what they prefer doing while at sea and ashore.

Now they are seeking transformative experiences, more off-the-beaten-track ports, bucket list moments, and longer itineraries. They want authenticity and unique interactions. They want to learn and grow. Our product is addressing this demand in a unique way – especially with enrichments like our S.A.L.T. program, onboard lectures by international experts, bespoke events ashore during extended voyages, and our incredible list of curated tours in each port.

Interestingly, we noticed that travel trends changed as a result of the cruise hiatus: our guests now tend to book much later than they used to; they book longer voyages, often back-to-back; and they are eager to travel as far and as wide as possible – to some of the world's most remote destinations, including both Polar Regions, especially.

**Now I understand that Silversea has returned to Asia cruising – what's the significance of this for the company? Where does Asia fit in its future?** Asia has always been an incredibly important cruising region for our guests. There is a real

desire to experience the soul of the region – the authentic food, the culture and the history. But it is vast and diverse, and often challenging when travelling overland.

An Asian cruise gives our guests the chance to experience four or five countries all on one itinerary, and our excursions are as varied and diverse as the countries themselves.

Between May 2023 and May 2025, Silversea will operate 7 ships – including our new Silver Nova – in 12 Asian countries, calling in over 50 destinations on voyages that range from 10 to 22 days. We will continue to expand our Asian offering with an emphasis on somewhat longer voyages and some truly exceptional expeditions.

**I also know that Silversea has a number of new ships coming online. I believe the Silver Nova is being delivered in 2023, with additional ships coming on line in following years. Can you talk about the expansion of the fleet and the significance of that expansion? How will these ships be different?**

We have added four ships in the past 3 years, and will welcome two Nova-class ships in 2023 and 2024. With each new ship, we evolve and fine-tune the layouts and experiences. A marked strategy, we continue to introduce ships that are tailored to sailing in particular regions or on certain itineraries: Silver Origin in the Galapagos, Silver Endeavour in Polar Regions, and Silver Nova for ocean cruising. Silver Nova will be a game changer and an evolution of our signature cruise experience. Not only will she be radical in terms of sustainability, but she will introduce an asymmetrical design and a horizontal layout for the first time in our history, with many pioneering features.

**Sustainability is becoming a more significant issue for both consumers and the travel and tourism industry. I'm wondering how you define 'sustainable cruising'? Can you talk about what Silversea is doing in the area of sustainability and, perhaps, where it fits in both the future of luxury travel and the future of the cruise industry in general?**

We at Royal Caribbean Group live by the mantra that respect for the oceans isn't a choice, it's a way of life. We are fully committed to leading the industry in this regard by investing in cutting-edge technologies, investing in the communities that we visit, and a host of other initiatives that enable us to deliver the world's best vacation experiences, responsibly. Silver Nova is an important step on our path to Destination Net Zero.



**I'm sure you conduct research with your customers, and I'm wondering what that research is telling you about their views on sustainable travel or, more specifically, sustainable cruising. Is sustainability a key driver of a consumer's travel decision?**

We invest in sustainability initiatives because we believe in them; it is not only a response to our guests' needs. It is not a marketing strategy, but rather the Group's vision and belief. Many of our guests share our outlook that sustainability is the future of ultra-luxury travel. More broadly speaking, the cruise industry is investing heavily in sustainability and is committed to pursuing net-zero carbon cruising by 2050.

**You were appointed president and CEO at the beginning of 2023 and I wanted to ask you about your vision for Silversea Cruises. Where do you want to take the company? What do you see as the opportunities for it? What are some of the challenges it might face? Where do you see it in three to five years from now?**

We will continue to strengthen our position as the leader in the luxury cruising space in the next five years. We project that by 2027 one in three travellers in the ultra-luxury cruise industry will choose Silversea. We will pursue our aggressive shipbuilding approach, launching new ships that are tailored to specific regions/itineraries. We will continue to offer the most varied and adventurous itineraries for our guests, allowing us to attract the next generation of experience-focused travellers.

We are excited for the future as part of Royal Caribbean Group and I am honoured to be at the helm of Silversea, leading an incredibly passionate and talented team during a period of rapid growth.

I would like to add that the Canadian market is incredibly important to us and the vast majority of our bookings in the market came from travel agents, who have played a key role in our strategy and will continue to do so. So, on behalf of everyone at Silversea, thank you!