

innovations

Focusing on innovation in the global cruise industry

Damen offers the cruise industry a 'one-stop shop' portfolio of services



Special Report
International Cruise Ship Industry

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Everything from finance to design and construction and repairs can be offered from one source.

With the news earlier this year that Damen Shipyards Group had signed a contract with Oslo-based SeaDream Yacht Club, Innovations contacted the Dutch company to find out about its offerings to the cruise and ferry sectors.

At the time of the March announcement, Damen Cruise Senior Vice President Sales and Marketing, Andrea Trevisan, said, "We are delighted to sign this historic contract with which the Damen Shipyards Group enters the cruise market. We feel very honoured that SeaDream has chosen Damen to deliver this special project and are looking forward to a long-term co-operation with this unique ultra-luxury brand."

This purpose built cruise megayacht will be designed to operate in destinations, including Polar and tropical regions, worldwide. To be able to sail to Polar regions, the vessel will be built to an Ice Class Polar Code 6 notation.

The Group launched Damen Cruise in 2018, explaining that the aim was to become a long-term partner for the cruise industry, providing services throughout the entire lifecycle of a vessel. For example, if required, a cruise ship project could start with the provision of finance solutions from AAA institutions and continue through construction and outfitting. Following



Andrea Trevisan, senior vice president sales Damen Cruise

a vessel's delivery, Damen will be able to continue supporting cruise ship operators with maintenance, repair and upgrade services at its worldwide repair yards.

SeaDream's cruise megayacht will be built and outfitted, including the interior, at Damen's Mangalia shipyard, working in partnership with



Damen has broken into the river cruise market



Cunards's 'Queen Elizabeth' seen undergoing refurbishment at Damen Brest

leading suppliers. Construction of the vessel is due to start in October of this year, with a scheduled delivery date of September, 2021.

Innovations spoke with Andrea Trevisan and asked for his views on the future of expedition ship newbuilding bearing in mind the surge of new orders announced in the past couple of years.

He agreed that there is a lot of expedition tonnage coming into the market and said that it will be interesting to see how the market will react to it.

“However, we still see a lot of enquiries for new newbuilding projects, so it looks like the expedition market is not yet saturated. I think we will have a proper answer in the next three years after most of the new tonnage has been delivered,” he said.

Scaling up

Looking at the size range of cruise ship designs on offer from Damen, Trevisan outlined the fact that Damen had signed the contract with SeaDream in February for the 16,500 gt explorer cruise yacht. However, he said that it was true

that at the moment Damen is looking more at smaller tonnage projects – up to around 30,000 gt. However, the company is preparing for the next step, which should be up to 50-70,000 gt.

“However, we want to scale up our cruise ambitions in a risk conscious manner. The bigger the project the larger the risks for a shipbuilder and cruise building is a complex activity, which requires experience and a strong organisation,” he explained.

By having a large group of companies, this lends itself to offering a one-stop-shop type service. Trevisan explained that this is the aim of the dedicated brand - Damen Cruise. “We are able to offer products and services to the cruise industry from throughout our large shipbuilding group. Financing of complex projects is one of our strongest assets and provides added value to our mission of providing comprehensive solutions to the cruise industry.

“We like to say that we are a long-term partner, offering not only shipbuilding, but services throughout the lifecycle of the vessel, including our cruise upgrade and maintenance services, which are unique and very successful,” he said.

Ship design

Leading Danish-based ship designer, Knud E. Hansen is also a member of the Damen Shipyards Group, however operating as an independent company. “We work together closely, but if needed or requested we work with other designers as well,” Trevisan stressed.

Talking about the ‘off-the-shelf’ designs as shown on Damen Cruises new website, Trevisan explained that the majority of Damen’s cruise activities involve customised design development in close dialogue with a client. “The ‘off-the-shelf’ concepts have been internal developments and are being used as a starting point for further customisation,” he said, re-iterating that the current focus is mainly on customised design development projects.

Damen also offers flexible cabin designs for cruise vessels, which can in principle be applied to all designs, depending on the customer’s ideas. The cabin concept is currently aimed at being constructed and outfitted on board. However, there is no technical limitation for modular applications.

The Group also has a large shiprepair portfolio, which is a rapidly growing market for the Damen Shiprepair & Conversion division. The yards that have and still do handle cruise ships on a regular

basis, include Brest, Rotterdam, Damen Verolme, Vlissingen and Amsterdam. Innovations was told that soon, the Curacao repair yard will have handled its first cruise ship.

In addition, Damen has a Harbour & Voyage Repair section, which is involved in warranty work for certain shipbuilders.

River cruises

The river cruise market has been growing fairly rapidly recently and Innovations was told that Damen is very much involved in the annual maintenance of river cruise vessels, primarily in the Amsterdam area which is a turnaround port. “Damen definitely sees an opportunity with the growth of the river cruise industry,” the company said.

Damen is also very active in river cruise ship newbuildings with a dedicated shipyard, Concordia Damen, located in the Netherlands. Concordia Damen recently signed a contract for what it called a “truly innovative river cruise ship (Rhine-max) for a prestigious client; A-Rosa”.

Through Damen’s Romanian shipyards, the company concluded that it could also add value to the river cruise industry sector and is monitoring this with particular interest.



CMV's 'Columbus' seen leaving Damen's Rotterdam shipyard at Schiedam following her purchase and refurbishment. Towards the end of September, her new consort 'Vasco da Gama' entered Damen's Amsterdam shipyard for her special survey. Work includes tail shaft overhaul, thruster exchange/overhaul, tank cleaning, blasting and hull painting, etc.

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