

# The 9 most exciting new cruise ships of 2023

(Courtesy of Gene Sloan, The Points Guy)

The coming year will be a big one for new cruise ships, though not as big as this year.

Perhaps the most notable new cruise ship of 2023 will be [MSC World Europa](#), the first of a new series of megaships from [MSC Cruises](#) that is designed to go head-to-head with [Royal Caribbean](#)'s giant Oasis-class ships.

It's just one of two major new cruise ships arriving in 2023 that has a tie-in to MSC Cruises. Also on the way is Explora 1, the first vessel for an all-new luxury line that is being developed by MSC Group, the parent company of MSC Cruises.

The year also will bring the first new ship from upscale line [Oceania Cruises](#) in nearly a decade, to be called Vista, and the first of a new class of ship for luxury line [Silversea Cruises](#), to be called Silver Nova.

Those four vessels — MSC World Europa, Explora 1, Vista and Silver Nova — are the four new cruise ships for 2023 that have us the most excited here at TPG. But they're not the only major new cruise vessels arriving during the next 12 months.

Also on the way are several significant new ships from major lines that, while new, will look familiar. That's because they will be sister ships to existing vessels. That is, while they will be new-builds, they will feature designs that we have seen before.

Among lines unveiling new ships that are sisters to vessels already in their fleets are [Norwegian Cruise Line](#), [Carnival Cruise Line](#), [Regent Seven Seas Cruises](#), [Virgin Voyages](#) and [Celebrity Cruises](#).

Because a large percentage of the new cruise ships arriving in 2023 belong to an existing class, rather than debuting a new look, cruise fans might not find the coming year's new arrivals to be as exciting as this year's debuts.

The past 12 months, notably, have seen the arrival of entirely new classes of vessels for Norwegian Cruise Line, [Disney Cruise Line](#), [Viking](#), [Seabourn](#) and Emerald Cruises, as well as an entirely new cruise brand ([The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection](#)). It was the sort of year that gets hearts racing for fans of new cruise ships.

Note that, in some cases, the new ships coming in 2023 will be arriving months behind schedule due to ongoing, pandemic-related construction delays at the shipyards that are building them. Thanks to such delays, the first sailings of a few ships that had been expected to debut in 2023 — including Royal Caribbean's much-awaited [Icon of the Seas](#) — have been pushed to 2024.

Icon of the Seas, which will be the biggest cruise ship in the world when it debuts, is now scheduled to sail with paying passengers for the first time in January 2024.

In all cases, the new ships that are on the way for 2023 are already available for booking — and, indeed, booking up fast. Cruise fans always love to be on the latest and greatest vessels.

To whet your appetite for cruising in the year ahead, take a look at our list of the nine new cruise ships arriving in 2023 that have us the most excited.

## MSC World Europa

**Maiden voyage:** Dec. 20, 2022.

### MSC CRUISES

Scheduled to be unveiled in the final days of 2022 (so close to year's end that we consider it a new vessel for 2023), this massive ship is nearly as big as Royal Caribbean's giant [Oasis-class vessels](#) — and that's a big deal.

This is the first time in the 13-year history of the record-breaking Oasis-class series (the world's biggest cruise ships) that a vessel has come close to the Royal Caribbean ships in size. MSC World Europa offers a major new option for cruisers who love being on the biggest, most amenity-packed vessels.

Plus, it's just the first of at least four sister vessels that MSC Cruises plans to unveil over the next few years, including [one destined for deployment in Florida](#).

In short, it kicks off a major new battle of the megaships.

At around 215,863 tons, MSC World Europa will be about 4% to 8% smaller than the five Oasis-class ships. But by one measure, it'll be even bigger. MSC World Europa will be 21 decks high — three decks higher than the Oasis-class vessels.

Like the Oasis-class ships, it'll be able to hold nearly 7,000 passengers with all berths filled — 6,762 to be exact.

As for its onboard offerings, MSC Cruises is taking a page from Royal Caribbean's playbook by breaking down the public areas of MSC World Europa into districts. They will include an adults-only "Zen district" and a separate "family district" that houses as many as 10 new kids facilities. There also will be a central interior promenade with entertainment, shops and bars.

In addition, MSC World Europa will have six pools and 14 hot tubs, making it one of the most pool-covered ships at sea. The watery offerings will include an Aquapark with multiple waterslides that will integrate virtual reality technology. There also will be a family sun deck.

MSC World Europa will have 13 dining venues, including the new-for-the-line Chef's Garden Kitchen (an outlet focused on microgreens) and La Pescaderia, a traditional seafood grill with alfresco seating. In a twist, the ship will have three separate buffet restaurants as well, each with its own ambiance.

Drinking spots will include a two-deck English-style pub dubbed Masters of the Sea Pub, which will serve beer made on board. In addition, a new gin bar will be a first for MSC Cruises.

Meanwhile, MSC Cruises also has a second new ship, the 4,810-passenger MSC Euribia, debuting in June 2023. At around 182,000 tons, it won't be quite as big as MSC World Europa but still one of the biggest cruise vessels in the world.

MSC World Europa will initially sail in the Persian Gulf out of Dubai before repositioning to the Mediterranean for the summer of 2023. Fares for seven-night sailings start at \$559 per person, not including taxes and fees.

## **Resilient Lady**

**Maiden voyage:** May 14.

Resilient Lady will be a sister to Scarlet Lady, which was completed in 2020. VIRGIN VOYAGES

Resilient Lady will be the third ship for Virgin Voyages, the startup line backed by Richard Branson — and it'll look familiar to anyone who has sailed on the brand's first two vessels (Scarlet Lady and Valiant Lady).

Originally scheduled to debut in 2022 but [delayed by nearly a year](#), the 2,770-passenger ship will be a nearly identical sister to the two earlier vessels, which began sailing in 2021 and 2022, respectively.

Like Scarlet Lady and Valiant Lady, Resilient Lady has been designed to [shake up the cruise industry](#) with a new, hipper style of cruising. The ship will have everything from [a tattoo parlor](#) to [colorful karaoke lounge](#) where you can get your Lizzo on. To ensure a proper party vibe, it also will be a [kid-free travel zone](#), with a minimum age to sail of 18.

Virgin is going after travelers who might think themselves too cool to cruise. To that end, Resilient Lady will have no buffets, no dress codes and no big Broadway-style theater shows. For entertainment, expect interactive dance parties, DJ sets and “microplays,” plus late-night games of dodgeball. Suites will have a [rock-star theme](#).

A fourth vessel in the series, Brilliant Lady, is scheduled to debut in 2024.

Resilient Lady will initially sail in the Mediterranean before repositioning to Australia for the winter (where it'll mostly cater to the Australian market). Fares start at \$455 per person for a two-night voyage out of Melbourne, Australia.

## **Vista**

**Maiden voyage:** May 20.

Rendering of Oceania Vista in Lisbon, Portugal. OCEANIA

Upscale line Oceania Cruises is getting back into growth mode in 2023 with the unveiling of Vista — its first new vessel in more than a decade.

At 67,000 tons, Vista will be a tad bigger than Oceania's last two new ships, Marina and Riviera. But it'll carry fewer passengers (1,200 versus 1,250), meaning that its “space ratio” of space per passenger will be higher.

The space ratio of a ship is considered a measure of how upscale it is, with higher space ratios typically corresponding to more luxurious vessels.

As for decor and amenities, Oceania has promised an “evolution” of the intimate, residential-style interior venues for which its ships are known. Vista will retain such Oceania signatures as a Grand Staircase at its center and a Grand Lounge that serves as a central meeting point, as well as a martini bar, Aquamar Spa, Horizons observation lounge, a tranquil pool area and a casino with an accompanying bar.

Oceania also has promised a wide range of cabin sizes for the ship, ranging from standard balcony cabins measuring 291 square feet (the largest standard balcony cabins in the industry, according to the line) to a range of supersuites that measure from 1,000 square feet for an Oceania Suite to 2,400 square feet for an Owner's Suite.

Vista also will be the [first Oceania vessel with solo cabins](#) — six in all. They'll measure 270 square feet and have their own balconies, something that is relatively rare for solo cabins on ocean ships.

In fact, every cabin on Vista will be a balcony cabin, as every cabin has either a full balcony or a more limited French balcony. The ship will have no windowless "inside" cabins or balcony-less "ocean-view" cabins.

The solo cabins, notably, also are concierge-level cabins, which means they come with access to a private, keycard-accessed concierge lounge and complimentary use of the ship's Spa Terrace.

Oceania long has been known as a foodie's line, and Vista won't disappoint, with 12 different culinary options for passengers — four of which will be new concepts for the brand.

The newcomers include Ember, serving "inventive American" cuisine, and wellness-focused Aquamar Kitchen (think smoothies, organic "power bowls" and yellowfin tacos with white cabbage slaw). Also new will be the Culinary Center Dining Room, an ocean-view space offering food-and-wine pairing experiences that will tie to the ship's cooking classroom, and a new Bakery at Barista outlet that will serve fresh-baked pastries.

Classic Oceania eateries that will be on board the ship include the line's signature Polo Grill steakhouse, Italian restaurant Toscana and upscale Asian outlet Red Ginger.

Vista will be the first of two sister vessels in the line's new Allura class. The second ship in the series is scheduled to debut in 2025.

Vista will initially sail in Europe before repositioning to North America for the winter. Fares start at \$1,699 per person, not including taxes and fees, for a seven-night Caribbean voyage out of Miami.

## **Explora 1**

**Maiden voyage:** July 17.

An artist's drawing of Explora I. EXPLORA JOURNEYS

Call it the biggest new cruise ship of 2023 — not in size, but in significance. The unveiling of Explora 1 will mark the arrival of Explora Journeys, an entirely new luxury line that could quickly become one of the biggest in the world.

A creation of the deep-pocketed MSC Group, which already owns MSC Cruises, Explora Journeys plans to launch at least six superluxurious vessels by 2028, each of which is designed to hold at least 922 passengers.

That'll give the line a bigger capacity in just a few years than such well-known luxury cruise operators as Seabourn and the [soon-to-relaunch Crystal Cruises](#).

Explora Journeys will be competing in the same upscale cruise space as Seabourn and Crystal, as well as luxury lines Viking, [Silversea Cruises](#) and The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection. It'll be run completely separately from its sister brand, MSC Cruises, which caters to a mass-market audience.

Like its five coming sisters, Explora 1 will offer oceanfront suites, penthouses and residences designed to be "homes at sea," and it'll be packed with upscale amenities. They will include 10 distinct culinary experiences, 10 indoor and outdoor bars and lounges, four swimming pools, outdoor deck areas with private cabanas, wellness facilities and entertainment.

MSC Group is the parent company of MSC Cruises and Explora Journeys as well as the Mediterranean Shipping Company. The latter, also known simply as MSC, is the largest container shipping company in the world.

Explora 1 will initially sail in Northern Europe before repositioning to North America for the winter. Fares start at \$3,600 per person, not including taxes and fees, for a three-night voyage from Hamburg, Germany, to Southampton, England.

### **Silver Nova**

**Maiden voyage:** Aug. 14.

An artist's drawing of Silver Nova. SILVERSEA CRUISES

The latest ship for luxury line Silversea will be bigger than its predecessors and feature an all-new design — one that, notably, will be asymmetrical in many areas. That is, some of the vessel's most prominent spaces, including its main pool area, will feature layouts that are off-center in a way that is unusual for cruise ships.

Silver Nova's main pool area, for instance, will have an unusual horseshoe shape with an orientation that runs from the port side of the ship to the starboard side. The pool itself will be off-center in the space, skewed far to the starboard side of the ship, with rows of lounge chairs and a grand entrance on its port side and unobstructed views through glass railings on its starboard side.

The idea is that the pool area will thus be much more orientated toward the destinations that the ship visits, or the open ocean when it is at sea, than the pool areas of other cruise vessels. Passengers will be able to float in the pool and look straight out over the water without the obstruction of more rows of lounge chairs.

Silver Nova's asymmetrical design also will be evident at two new food and drinks venues at the top of the vessel. The first, Marquee, will be an alfresco dining venue that also is off-center, with an orientation that offers commanding views of the sea from the port side of the ship. It'll be home to The Grill, Silversea's signature outdoor "hot rocks" dining venue, and also double as the ship's Spaccanapoli pizza outlet. The second new venue, The Dusk Bar, will be an open-air sky bar at the back of the vessel that, like Marquee, is also positioned on the port side of the ship.

Additional dining venues on board will include versions of Silversea's signature main La Terrazza restaurant, French eatery La Dame, seafood eatery Atlantide and sushi outlet Kaiseki.

In addition to asymmetry in many areas, one thing that will be particularly noticeable about Silver Nova is its spaciousness. At 54,700 tons, the ship will be about 34% bigger than the line's last three new

vessels —Silver Muse, Silver Moon and Silver Dawn. But it'll only hold about 22% more passengers. That means the space available per passenger will be going up significantly.

With every berth filled, Silver Nova will sail with 728 passengers — just 132 more than the earlier vessels.

The extra space has allowed Silversea to expand its lineup of cabin categories on the ship, with more large suites. As is always the case with Silversea ships, every cabin on the ship will be a suite. But Silversea fans will find new premium aft suites that include a massive, 1,324-square foot complex called the Otium Suite. Inspired by [Silversea's new wellness program, Otium](#), the Otium Suite is located in a premium aft corner position of the ship (according to the cruise line) and features floor-to-ceiling windows in all living areas. It has a sprawling, 431-square-foot balcony area that is the most spacious on board.

Even the smallest cabins on Silver Nova will measure at least 357 square feet, which is unusually large for a cruise ship cabin.

Silver Nova will initially sail in the Mediterranean before repositioning to the Caribbean for the winter of 2023. Fares start at \$4,700 per person, including a flight credit, airport transfers and shore excursions, for a seven-night Caribbean sailing out of Miami.

## **Norwegian Viva**

**Maiden voyage:** Aug. 26.

The rollout of Norwegian Cruise Line's much-awaited Prima class of ships continues in 2023 with the arrival of Norwegian Viva — the second vessel in the series after the [recently unveiled Norwegian Prima](#).

Like Norwegian Prima, Norwegian Viva is [notably smaller](#) than other vessels the line has been adding in recent years, such as the 3-year-old, 169,116-ton [Norwegian Encore](#) — a factor that will allow it to access smaller ports around the world. But, also like Norwegian Prima, Norwegian Viva still will pack a lot of over-the-top amenities, including a [go-kart track that spreads over three decks](#).

In addition, Norwegian Viva will boast The Drop, a 10-story dry slide that Norwegian says offers more G-force than an accelerating Formula One race car. The vessel also will be home to a three-deck theater that converts into a Las Vegas-style nightclub and also will host interactive, real-life game shows, including at-sea versions of “The Price Is Right.”

Still, like Norwegian Prima, Norwegian Viva will be about more than flashy activities and entertainment. It'll also mark the continuation of a more upscale turn for the line that began with Norwegian Prima. Norwegian Viva will offer [a wide range of suite categories](#) (13) as well as the largest three-bedroom suites of any new cruise vessel. Inside, ocean-view and balcony cabins on Norwegian Viva also will be larger than has been typical for Norwegian ships in the past.

Norwegian Viva also will offer the most outdoor deck space of any new cruise ship, according to the line, including more total pool deck space than any other ship in the brand's fleet other than Norwegian Prima.

Norwegian Viva will initially sail in the Mediterranean before repositioning to the Caribbean for the winter of 2023. Fares start at \$849 per person, not including taxes and fees, for a seven-night Caribbean sailing out of Miami.

## **Carnival Jubilee**

**Maiden voyage:** Oct. 30.

Carnival Jubilee will be a sister to the just-unveiled Carnival Celebration.

Carnival Cruise Line will continue its move toward bigger ships in 2023 with the unveiling of Carnival Jubilee — the third vessel in its new Excel-class series.

Under construction at a shipyard in Germany, the 15-deck-high ship is a sister to the line's recently unveiled [Mardi Gras](#) and [Carnival Celebration](#), which have [made waves in the past 18 months](#) for their huge size and what may be the most unusual attraction ever on a cruise vessel: [a deck-top roller coaster](#).

Like Mardi Gras and Carnival Celebration, Carnival Jubilee will measure 181,808 tons, putting it in a tie with the former ships for the position of biggest ship ever to sail for Carnival. The two earlier vessels in the series are a whopping 35% bigger than the next-biggest Carnival ships currently afloat, and they are also bigger than all but 11 other cruise vessels in the world.

Also like Mardi Gras and Carnival Celebration, Carnival Jubilee will have a roller coaster on its top deck. Dubbed Bolt: Ultimate Sea Coaster, it'll be similar to the roller coasters on its sister vessels, with an 800-foot-long track and vehicles that reach speeds of 40 miles per hour — give or take.

Carnival Jubilee will also be designed to hold up to 6,630 passengers. That's just a tad below the 7,084 passengers that can fit aboard Royal Caribbean's [Wonder of the Seas](#) — the world's largest cruise ship.

Carnival Jubilee will have a giant water park on its top deck and, like its sister, a [far broader array of suites](#) than earlier Carnival ships. However, the vessel won't be a carbon copy of the previous vessels. Carnival has said some new features are planned.

The development of ships on the scale of Carnival Jubilee and its sisters has been a big deal for Carnival. Until recently, the line had resisted the trend among major brands to build ever-bigger vessels that offer a supersized megaresort-at-sea experience.

Carnival's last new vessel before the arrival of Mardi Gras in 2021, Carnival Panorama, didn't even crack the top 40 list of biggest ships when it debuted in 2019.

After an initial transatlantic voyage from Southampton, England, to Galveston, Texas, Carnival Jubilee will sail seven-night voyages to the Western Caribbean out of Galveston. Fares start at \$549 per person, not including taxes and fees.

## **Seven Seas Grandeur**

**Maiden voyage:** Nov. 25.

Seven Seas Grandeur will be a sister vessel to Seven Seas Splendor.

Every few years, Regent Seven Seas Cruises comes out with a new ship so luxurious that it verges on the ridiculous — and that, in a nutshell, is what Seven Seas Grandeur will be.

A sister vessel to Regent's Seven Seas Explorer and Seven Seas Splendor (unveiled in 2015 and 2020, respectively), the 750-passenger ship will, like its sisters, be one of the most expensive cruise vessels ever built with all sorts of over-the-top luxuries.

Expect soaring ceilings, inlaid marble floors, crystal chandeliers and Picassos on the walls, for starters.

When it comes to cabins, Seven Seas Grandeur basically will offer two choices: fancy and really, really fancy. Every one of the ship's 375 rooms will be a suite. Even the smallest accommodations will measure 307 square feet, which is not too shabby for a cruise ship. But many cabins will be much bigger.

The biggest accommodation on board, the [Regent Suite](#), will measure an astounding 4,443 square feet — nearly twice the square footage of the average American home. It'll cost \$11,000 a night.

Seven Seas Grandeur also will offer an array of elegant and high-end restaurants, all of which are included in the fare.

This is what you would expect from Regent, of course. Known for its luxury focus, the 30-year-old brand has long operated some of the world's most elegant ships. Regent is the cruising equivalent of the hotel world's Four Seasons chain — a brand promising beautiful accommodations, refined food and pampering service.

After an initial transatlantic voyage from Barcelona to Miami, Seven Seas Grandeur will operate Caribbean sailings out of Miami for the winter before returning to Europe for the summer of 2024. Fares start at \$4,439 per person, not including taxes and fees, for a seven-night Caribbean sailing out of Miami.

## **Celebrity Ascent**

**Maiden voyage:** Dec. 3.

Celebrity Ascent will be a sister to the recently unveiled Celebrity Beyond.

Celebrity Cruises will continue the rollout of its new Edge class of ships in 2023 with the unveiling of Celebrity Ascent — the fourth of five vessels in the series.

Like the last new Edge-class ship, the 8-month-old [Celebrity Beyond](#), it'll be a stretched version of the two initial ships in the series ([Celebrity Edge](#) and [Celebrity Apex](#)), being both 20 meters longer and a deck taller.

As was the case with Celebrity Beyond, the extra length and height will allow for new and bigger venues, including an expanded "resort-within-a-resort" area for suite passengers called The Retreat and a greatly expanded Sunset Bar at the back of the vessel.



Like Celebrity Beyond, Celebrity Ascent also will offer a redesigned Rooftop Garden area with increased seating, new private nooks and two new floating pools cantilevered over the side of the ship.

Another area that will be bigger on Celebrity Ascent than on the first two Edge-class ships is the three-deck-high Grand Plaza.

As was the case with Celebrity Beyond, Ascent will have 179 more cabins than its sister vessels, which each have 1,467 cabins. That's about a 12% increase. As a result, Celebrity Ascent, like Celebrity Beyond, will hold 3,260 passengers at double occupancy. That's up from a 2,910-passenger capacity at double occupancy for Celebrity Apex and a 2,918-passenger capacity at double occupancy for Celebrity Edge.

Celebrity Ascent initially will sail to the Caribbean out of Fort Lauderdale's Port Everglades. Fares start at \$1,056 per person for a seven-night sailing.

#### Other new ships

In addition to the above, newcomers for 2023 also include several small expedition ships and other small vessels from such cruise operators as Scenic Luxury Cruises & Tours, Seabourn, Emerald Cruises, Vantage Travel and Atlas Ocean Voyages.

Viking also has a new ocean ship coming in 2023 that is a sister to earlier vessels.