



## COSTA CRUISES DEBUTS IN TARANTO IN 2023

October 27, 2022

*From June 3 to October 7 2023, Costa Pacifica will call every Saturday as part of a one-week direct itinerary to the Greek islands. The ship's international guests will also have the opportunity to visit Taranto and its territory with a wide range of organised excursions.*

Taranto, October 27, 2022 – In summer 2023, Taranto will become a new port of call for **Costa Cruises**. From June 3 until October 7, **Costa Pacifica**, one of the Italian-flagged ships of the Costa fleet, will be in Taranto every week as part of an itinerary to discover the Greek islands.

The announcement was made today during a press conference organised at the Palazzo di Città in Taranto, attended by **Rinaldo Melucci**, Mayor of Taranto, **Sergio Prete**, President of the Ionian Sea Port System Authority and Extraordinary Commissioner of the Port of Taranto, **Gianfranco Lopane**, Councillor for Tourism of the Apulia Region, **Raffaella Del Prete**, General Manager of Italian Cruise Ports of Global Ports Holding, and **Mario Zanetti**, President of Costa Cruises.

19 calls are scheduled for Costa Pacifica in Taranto, on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. In addition to Taranto, the ship will also visit Catania, Valletta (Malta), Mykonos (Greece), and Santorini (Greece), allowing guests to enjoy the best of the Greek islands, two wonderful destinations in Puglia and Sicily, two of Italy's most popular regions for international tourism, as well as the island of Malta, all in a single holiday.

In this itinerary, Taranto will be both port of embarkation and disembarkation, which can also be reached with the "flight+cruise" package, and port of transit for guests embarking in other ports, particularly Catania. The thousands of Italian and foreign cruise guests arriving in Taranto will be able to visit the city and the area independently, as well as by choosing from the wide range of organised excursions the company is working on with the support of local institutions and operators. In particular, the tour project in Taranto is focusing on visiting the historic centre, the Cathedral, the Aragonese Castle and the MarTa archaeological museum, while visits to major provincial and regional destinations are planned in the area, as well as a catamaran tour of the Gulf of Taranto.

*"Costa Cruises includes Taranto on the map of valuable cruise tourism. It is a novelty that will make a further contribution to the city's tourism development process, allowing our guests to discover a destination that is new to many, but which really has a lot to offer. In order for Taranto to become a consolidated cruise tourism destination, collaboration with local institutions and operators, whom I thank for their willingness so far, is fundamental. We must work together to guarantee the services necessary to enhance the experience cruise guests will have in Taranto, such as reception services or organised excursions. I am certain that with everyone's help we will achieve great results" - said **Mario Zanetti**, President of Costa Cruises.*

*"The arrival of Costa Cruises," - said Mayor **Melucci** - "in addition to being excellent news for the city's entire hospitality system, confirms what we have been advocating for some time now: Taranto is growing as a tourist destination, consolidating its appeal. The rotation of operators is a symptom of the market's attention to a destination that still has room to express its potential. We will always offer maximum cooperation to anyone who believes in the rebirth of our city, and we found the same harmony with Costa that we had already found with other players in the sector. We are confident that our port will grow further and will have strength and capacity to attract many more companies."*

*"The strategy for the development of the cruise segment in the port of Taranto," - said **Sergio Prete**, President of the Ionian Sea Port System Authority - "today marks a new important milestone for this destination, which is acquiring an increasingly prestigious position on the Mediterranean map of cruise itineraries. The launch of this new partnership is possible thanks to the well-established co-operation with local and regional institutional actors and port operators, first and foremost the Maritime Authority, and will be an element of further stimulus for a coordinated tourist enhancement of the immense historical, architectural and natural heritage of Taranto. An area that, starting from the port of Taranto, embraces a vast territory. With the challenge of homeporting, guaranteed with the upgrading of embarkation and disembarkation procedures, the Port of Taranto confirms itself as the pivot infrastructure of an efficient intermodal system, actually opening the territory to new scenarios capable of facilitating the economy and the further development of the tourism sector in the city of Taranto."*

**Gianfranco Lopane**, Councillor for Tourism of the Apulia Region said: *"The arrival of another player in Taranto, such as the Costa Group, confirms the attractiveness and beauty of the city and its port. As Apulia Region we follow cruise and nautical tourism very closely and we will continue to work alongside the Municipality of Taranto for the growth of the sector. For this reason, today we are announcing an important measure to encourage maritime tourism: in the coming days we will publish a notice to finance communication and promotion initiatives in support of the Puglia brand by cruise companies and tour operators: 400,000 euros will be allocated on an experimental basis for activities that will take place in 2023. Six out of ten cruise passengers confirm that they want to return to the city where they land, with important economic impact in the economy of the territories. Data acquired by the Pugliapromozione Observatory reveal that 90% of the tourists who come to Puglia by sea, mainly by cruise ships, have never seen our region before, that they come there for the first time by sea and visit the main tourist destinations during the ship's call. Cruises become for the destination Puglia and for Taranto, a showcase, an opportunity for visibility and incentive for the travellers to repeat the experience for more days and return to our territories."*

*"This is a really positive year for Taranto Cruise Port." - stated **Raffaella Del Prete**, General Manager of Italian Cruise Ports of Global Ports Holding Del Prete - "Costa decision to include Taranto in its itineraries is a further, very welcome confirmation that comes just a few months after winning in Malaga the prestigious "Seatrade Med Cruise Award 2022" as Emerging Destination of the Year, obtained together with the Port Authority. These results do not come by chance, they are the result of a long work of preparation, promotion of the destination in synergy with institutions and local authorities. In addition, with Costa Cruises for the first time Taranto is home port; therefore, we will handle a volume of embarkations and disembarkations never before operated in Taranto, which sees us prepared and confident thanks to the experience gained by the local team in the*

*past years and the deep operational expertise of Global Ports Holding, the largest cruise terminal operator in the world, of which Taranto Cruise Port is part."*

### ***Costa Pacifica***

Costa Pacifica, the ship that will visit Taranto in 2023, has a gross tonnage of 114,500 and can accommodate up to 3,780 guests, featuring 521 cabins with balconies, nine swimming pools and whirlpools, six restaurants and food outlets, and 11 bars & lounges.

The discovery of the itinerary's destinations already begins on board, with unique and unforgettable experiences, such as the dishes created especially for Costa by three world-famous chefs: **Bruno Barbieri, Hélène Darroze and Ángel León**.

In the two main restaurants, each evening a 'Destination Dish' by one of the three chefs is served, interpreting the tradition and flavours of the place that will be visited the following day. The **Archipelago** restaurant offers a choice of three entire menus, one for each chef, consisting of five refined dishes, designed to explore through food that part of the sea that the ship is sailing. The design of the restaurant is also innovative. Archipelago is made up of "island" tables, bordered by a copper structure that embraces unique pieces of "driftwood", wood returned from the sea and recovered thanks to the "Guardians of the Coast", the environmental education programme for the protection of the Italian coastline promoted by the Costa Crociere Foundation. For every dinner at Archipelago, Costa Cruises will donate part of the proceeds to the foundation to support environmental and social projects.

Still talking about good food, not to be missed is the pizzeria **Pummid oro**, where real Italian pizza is served with sourdough and quality ingredients, and **Sushino at Costa**, a seaside sushi bistro. For a sunset aperitif there is the **Aperol Spritz Bar**, dedicated to the world's most famous Italian cocktail.

Music is the fil rouge on board, giving its name to the decks and public areas, and is the star every night in the ship's theatre, with spectacular shows: musicals, comedy shows, acrobats, games and much more.

Families with children are spoiled for choice, with the **Squok club** and **Peppa Pig** area and the **teen club**, offering many fun and stimulating activities. But also the **toboggan**, the **multi-sports field**, the **arcade games room**, the **Amarillo gelateria**, for an artisanal ice-cream by Agrimontana, and the **Salty Beach**, a space where many street food proposals can be tasted.

For lovers of sport and wellness, there is the **gym** and the **Solemio Spa**, both overlooking the sea.

### ***For further information:***

Costa Cruises Press Office – phone. +39 010 5483523 / 010 5483068 - [costapressoffice@costa.it](mailto:costapressoffice@costa.it)

Gabriele Baroni - Communication Director - phone +39 3497668013 - [baroni@costa.it](mailto:baroni@costa.it)

Rossella Carrara – VP Corporate Relations & Sustainability Costa Group - phone +39 3497668005 [rossella.carrara@costa.it](mailto:rossella.carrara@costa.it)

Davide Barbano – Media Relations Manager – phone +39 334 6525216 - [barbano@costa.it](mailto:barbano@costa.it)

[www.costapresscenter.com](http://www.costapresscenter.com)