



## COSTA CRUISES PRESENTS “CHOCOCRUISE - EXPLORE THE WORLD OF CHOCOLATE”

August 2, 2023

*In partnership with Barry Callebaut, Costa Toscana will host five of the world's best master pastry chefs from Italy, Spain, France, Switzerland and Belgium. Together with Costa Cruises' Corporate Pastry Chef & Baker, Riccardo Bellaera, they will be the protagonists of an extraordinary Mediterranean cruise dedicated to chocolate in all its forms.*

Genoa, August 2nd, 2023 – **Costa Cruises** and **Barry Callebaut**, a world leader in the production of high-quality chocolate and cocoa, renew their partnership in the name of excellence for “**ChocoCruise – Explore the World of Chocolate**”: an entire cruise dedicated to **chocolate**, designed to give to pastry lovers a week of sweetness and relaxation aboard Costa Cruises' flagship, Costa Toscana.

From November 17th to 24th, 2023, the ChocoCruise will take guests in a gastronomical itinerary through the wonderful landscapes of the **Mediterranean**, with calls in Genoa, Marseille, Barcelona, Cagliari, Naples, and Civitavecchia/Rome.

During this themed cruise, **five of the world's greatest master pastry chefs** from Italy, Spain, France, Switzerland, and Belgium, all members of the Barry Callebaut Chocolate Academy and Ambassadors of Barry Callebaut, along with **Riccardo Bellaera**, Corporate Pastry Chef & Baker of Costa, will offer a real journey within the journey, discovering the refined art of chocolate-related pastry. The five pastry masters who will aboard the ChocoCruise 2023 are **Alberto Simionato** (Italy), **Joël Perriard** (Switzerland), **Philippe Bertrand** (France), **Ramon Morató** (Spain), and **Alexandre Bourdeaux** (Belgium).

The program includes a rich proposal of experiences, all featuring chocolate as the protagonist. Guests will be able to experience chocolate dishes from breakfast to dinner, including savory dishes, tasting this food in all its variations and combinations, depending on the destination visited by the ship.

Throughout the week, there will be meetings and show cookings held by the master pastry chefs and Riccardo Bellaera, who will tell their professional stories and share secrets in the kitchen, all while showing the preparation of the chocolate dish of the day.

Every day, guests will have the opportunity to attend workshops related to chocolate culture in the Lab, the ship's galley laboratory, accompanied by tastings of the pastry masters' signature dishes.

Chocolate will also be a protagonist in beverages. Thanks to the partnership with **Bacardi**, two Italian master bartenders, Europe Cruise Brand Ambassadors of the brand, will present special and unique cocktails, using chocolate among the ingredients.

The chocolate-themed events will further enrich the gastronomic offerings of Costa Toscana: throughout the itinerary exploring Italy, France, and Spain, guests will have the chance to enjoy the "Destination Dishes", dishes related to the destination they will visit the following day, signed by one of the Costa's three world-renowned international chef partners Bruno Barbieri, Ángel León, and Hélène Darroze. For those seeking a unique experience, the Archipelago restaurant offers a choice of three menus, one from each chef, composed by five refined dishes designed to explore and discover the tastes of the sea through the flavors of the cuisine. Additionally, aboard the Costa Toscana guests can indulge in the creative Asian cuisine at Teppanyaki, Sushino, and Pummid'Oro, for 100% Made in Italy pizza.

Chocolate/Food lovers can book their cabin on the ChocoCruise 2023, departing on Costa Toscana on November 17th, through travel agencies or directly with Costa.

### **Master pastry chefs on board**

**Riccardo Bellaera**: Sicilian from Modica, Riccardo joined Costa as Corporate Pastry & Bakery Chef in 2012. Since then, he has created a unique pastry experience for all Costa ships, extending guests' journey through their meals. His desserts are characterized by creativity and a delicate balance of crispness, sweetness and acidity. Bellaera is a two-time winner of the "Luxury Pastry in the world" award, and a recipient of the "World Pastry Stars" award. For two consecutive years, in 2022 and 2023, Bellaera won the "Different Visions Great Ideas" award at Sigep in Rimini, the International Exhibition of Ice Cream, Pastry and Bakery. Since 2022, he has become a member of A.P.E.I. (Ambassadors of Italian Pastry Excellence), as a Pastry Chef Ambassador of Italian Excellence. Also in 2023, he was named among the best pastry chefs in the world, Ambassador of Italian Catering Sweets on Costa Cruises. He is a collaborator and friend of the master of international pastry masters, Iginio Massari.

**Alberto Simionato** approached the world of dessert at a very young age, starting out in bakery and ice cream workshops. He subsequently studied at prestigious culinary schools, such as the Etoile Institute, where he discovered his passion for high level pastry. His expertise with chocolate comes immediately after when he meets and works with three distinguished chocolate Chefs - Beduschi, Laghi and Morató. Since 2019, Alberto has been Director of the Barry Callebaut Chocolate Academy in Milan.

**Philippe Bertrand**. You might have come across his most recent creations on social media, his creativity takes no rest. His love for challenge and perfection and his creations surprise and inspire close to half a million viewers every day. He has been with the world leader Barry Callebaut for over 30 years. As Head of the French Chocolate Academy and promoter of Barry Callebaut brands, Philippe Bertrand leads his team with fun and passion, energy and the will to push the limits further every day. He loves to share and help, he is passionate about the products and empowering people is natural for him. Philippe has helped many famous colleagues up the ladder of fame. His daily routine is about running the Chocolate Academy but Philippe keeps sharing his passion and techniques all over the world. Philippe is always in the look-out and gets inspired by new trends and market

behavior. Philippe's definition of success is to bring the little extra something to his peers so that their daily life is better and their passion intact. He undoubtedly is a major influencer in the world of Pastry and Confectionery.

**Ramon Morató:** born in Manlleu, Barcelona into a family with no connections whatsoever to the world of confectionery, he found himself drawn to it nevertheless, and after completing his studies, Ramon Morató began his training in a number of different establishments. He combined his studies with numerous courses offered at the school of the Barcelona Provincial Confectioners' Association. During a period of internships at several of the best Spanish confectioners, he also went to important schools and technical centers such as ZDS Solingen, Germany and the Richard Conseil School in Lyon, France. As the result of these years of work, his experience and his ongoing desire for innovation, he published "Ramon Morató Chocolate", which won the Best Cookbook in the World on the subject of Chocolate in 2007 at the distinguished Gourmand World Cookbook Awards, becoming a reference on the topic and still is to this date one of the best selling books on chocolate. In December 2016 he published the book "Four in One" together with chefs Raul Bernal, Josep Maria Ribé and Miquel Guarro, on the occasion of the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Chocolate Academy™ center in Barcelona. Last July 2021 he published the book FILES, a compilation of his best recipes and projects from the last five years as the Cacao Barry Creative Director, along with new recipes created especially for this book. The possibility of connecting with many professionals in different fields gave him ample knowledge of the sector and helped him to realize his passion for teaching, researching and creating products related to the world of confectionery. In recent years, this has brought him to teach courses, seminars and conferences all over the world, as well as special endeavors such as a collaboration project with Harvard University through the Alicia Foundation. As the Creative Director for the Cacao Barry brand, Ramon continues to shape the world of chocolate.

**Joël Perriard:** Joel Perriard joined the Chocolate Academy™ Center in 2012 as adviser and after three years he was promoted to the Head of the Chocolate Academy™ Center. Joel Perriard completed his training as a confectioner in the atelier of Wodey-Suchard in Neuchâtel and later worked as a pastry chef in various restaurants. In 2010 he and his wife ran the Hacienda San Agustin de Callo, a boutique hotel in Ecuador. Right before he joined our team, Joel worked at the two-Michelin Star restaurant Mesa in Zurich. He won the Young Swiss Confiseur awards in Montreux and fourth place at the Swiss Championships for Young Confectioners in Lucerne.

**Alexandre Bourdeaux:** "Live your dreams and work hard to achieve them." Alexandre started baking at a very young age and knew that baking cakes and traveling were his passion. His career started in a 1 star Michelin restaurant in Belgium where he learnt classic recipes he still makes today. Later, Alexandre went out into the world and worked in prestigious 5-star hotels. On his return to Belgium, at Callebaut headquarters he could develop his passion to share his knowledge and became head of the Chocolate Academy™ in Belgium and led the opening of the new Chocolate Academy™ Callebaut in 2014, marking an historical moment in the story of the brand. Alexandre keeps collaborating with Callebaut, but today he has spread his wings and has launched his own company in 2016 Pastry & Chocadvice to give advice, help & solutions in the world of pastry and chocolate. In March 2018, he launched an online software "ganache solution" that helps chefs to monitor their own recipes. He was judge together with Paco Torreblanca of an Italian television show "Best bakery".

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