

VIKING CELEBRATES START OF INAUGURAL SEASON IN NORTH AMERICA'S GREAT LAKES

The 378-Guest Viking Octantis Becomes the Most Modern Vessel to Sail in the Region

Los Angeles (May 26, 2022) – Viking® (www.viking.com) continues to mark new milestones for its expedition voyages, as the new purpose-built *Viking Octantis*® kicks off its inaugural season in the Great Lakes. Designed specifically to reach the Great Lakes region, the *Viking Octantis* recently completed a roundtrip through the Welland Canal—a key section of the St. Lawrence Seaway connecting Lake Ontario and Lake Erie—making it the largest passenger vessel ever to transit the canal. The ship will remain in the Great Lakes until early October 2022, sailing a variety of itineraries between Toronto and Duluth. A second expedition vessel, the *Viking Polaris*®, will debut later this year and will join the *Viking Octantis* in the Great Lakes for the 2023 season.

“Our expedition ships were designed with the Great Lakes in mind. This region has been historically underserved by cruise lines, and we are delighted by the warm and enthusiastic reception we have received from the local communities,” said Torstein Hagen, Chairman of Viking. “With our first season now underway, we are pleased with the strong demand among our guests and look forward to introducing even more curious travelers to these fantastic destinations in 2023.”

Viking's arrival to the Great Lakes brings the newest and most modern vessels ever to explore this region of North America, as well as a significant commitment to local tourism and economic development for the states of Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Ohio (beginning in 2023) and the Canadian province of Ontario.

To help develop the scientific enrichment program for its Great Lakes voyages, Viking has partnered with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory (GLERL), which conducts innovative research on the dynamic environments and ecosystems of the Great Lakes and coastal regions to provide information for resource use and management decisions that lead to safe and sustainable ecosystems, ecosystem services, and human communities. Viking's expedition ships have also been designated official NOAA / U.S. National Weather Service weather balloon stations, from which regular launches are undertaken.

2022—2023 Great Lakes Voyages:

During Viking's inaugural 2022 season, the company is operating four new itineraries in the Great Lakes. Highlights include:

- **Undiscovered Great Lakes (8 days; Thunder Bay to Milwaukee)** – Cross the width of Lake Superior between Duluth and the Soo Locks, exploring the Apostle Islands and Keweenaw Peninsula along the way. Hike along clifftop trails for sweeping views of the lake. Gain insight into the unique features and ecosystems of remote wilderness islands, and admire Kakabeka Falls, the “Niagara of the North.” Discover sea caves by kayak and step back in time as you stroll the quaint, car-free streets of Mackinac Island.
- **Great Lakes Explorer (8 days; Milwaukee to Thunder Bay)** – Discover the maze of granite islands that comprise Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve while hiking and kayaking through its tranquil beauty and admiring sweeping vistas. Experience Victorian charm on Mackinac Island and venture into the boreal forests of Sleeping Giant Provincial Park on Lake Superior's northern shore. Explore coastal wetlands replete with birdlife, comb pristine beaches and get acquainted with native cultures of the northern Great Lakes.
- **Niagara & The Great Lakes (8 days; Toronto to Milwaukee)** – From urban skylines to uninhabited islands, discover North America's wilderness alongside renowned cultural attractions while cruising the striking waterways of the Great Lakes. Immerse yourself in the lakes' compelling shipping history, experience the power of thundering Niagara Falls and keep watch for scores of migratory birds at Point Pelee. Led by a team of experts, explore sheltered bays and woodlands to uncover complex ecosystems and hidden treasures.
- **Canadian Discovery (13 days; New York to Toronto)** – Unleash your inner explorer in the remote wilds of eastern Canada. Discover this region's rich colonial past amid stunning natural settings. Admire the unparalleled beauty of the rugged coast of the Canadian Maritimes. Cruise along the wide expanse of the St. Lawrence River and marvel at the dramatic cliffs and wildlife of the Saguenay River Valley. Engaging shore excursions in each port allow you to better enjoy all this region has to offer.

In 2023, Viking will add a new, 15-day voyage:

- **Great Lakes Collection (15 days; Toronto to Duluth)** – Join Viking for a unique expedition across the historic waterways of all five of the majestic Great Lakes. Experience culture-rich urban centers and admire the awesome power of thundering Niagara Falls. Explore the granite islands and sheltered inlets of Georgian Bay and traverse the famous Soo Locks. Study the aquatic ecosystems of the lakes and venture into the dense boreal forests that line the shores of Lake Superior and Lake Michigan.

Viking Expedition Ships

The new Polar Class *Viking Octantis* and *Viking Polaris* host 378 guests in 189 staterooms. The vessels are purpose-built for expeditions, at an ideal size for safety and comfort in

remote destinations. With more indoor and outdoor viewing areas than other expedition vessels, guests are as close as possible to the most magnificent scenery on earth. Highlights include:

- **The Aula:** A stunning panoramic auditorium inspired by the University of Oslo's famed ceremonial hall, the former venue for the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony. Used for lectures, daily briefings, documentaries and films, this spectacular venue features a 4k laser-projected screen that retracts to expose floor-to-ceiling windows and 270° views.
- **Finse Terrace:** An outdoor lounge area just above sea level with recessed, heated seating and lava rock "firepits," the Finse Terrace was designed to allow guests the comforts of the ship al fresco while enjoying the dramatic scenery. Named after the Finse Plateau in Norway, where some of the greatest polar explorers, including Nansen and Amundsen, did their expedition training in preparation for their North and South Pole expeditions.
- **The Hangar:** A state-of-the-art, industry-first in-ship marina providing ease of embarkation and disembarkation of Special Operations Boats and other equipment while sheltered from the elements.
- **The Bow:** An important forward-viewing platform. And in the case of inclement weather, **The Shelter** is a comfortable, partially enclosed space for guests to warm up with a hot drink before going back out into the elements.
- **The Science Lab:** Developed in partnership with the University of Cambridge and Akvaplan-Niva, The Science Lab, at 380 sq. ft., is designed to support a broad range of research activities and is equipped with wet and dry laboratory facilities. Guests have supervised access to The Science Lab to learn from and participate with scientists in undertaking meaningful research.
- **Expedition Central:** The hub for the expedition team to consult with guests on their expedition activities and share knowledge about the destinations on a one-on-one basis, with the aid of 3D printed maps, digital screens, and a state-of-the-art spatial data visualization chart table.
- **Dining Choices:** The Restaurant offers fine dining featuring regional cuisine and always-available classics; the casual World Café offers an open kitchen, bakery, grill and premium seafood and sushi choices, as well as a wide range of international flavors; Mamsen's, named for the Hagen family matriarch, serves Scandinavian-inspired fare; and Manfredi's offers the best of Italian cuisine.
- **The Nordic Spa:** Following a day of exploration, The Nordic Spa offers guests opportunities to experience the ultimate healthy Nordic traditions, with an indoor heated pool set against expansive windows and a *badestamp* (wood-sided hot tub) that is open to the outside.
- **Explorers' Lounge:** Located high on the ship with floor-to-ceiling windows, the Explorers' Lounge provides guests an ideal space to take in the magnificent scenery, share discoveries with fellow travelers or to enjoy a drink.

- **The Living Room:** On *Viking Octantis* and *Viking Polaris*, The Living Room is located to maximize views of the surroundings through floor-to-ceiling windows and a library that informs even the best-read explorers. The Library is curated by acclaimed London bookshop Heywood Hill, as on all Viking vessels, as well as Cambridge University's Scott Polar Research Institute.
- **Nordic Balcony:** A first for polar expedition vessels, all staterooms on board Viking's expedition ships feature a Nordic Balcony, a sunroom that converts into an al fresco viewing platform with an observation shelf at elbow level to stabilize binoculars or a camera. Guests can choose from six stateroom categories that range from 222 sq. ft. to 1,223 sq. ft.—all with a Nordic Balcony, as well as a king-size bed and large bathroom with spacious glass-enclosed shower, heated bathroom floor and anti-fog mirror. Every stateroom is also equipped with a unique floor-to-ceiling drying closet that circulates warm air to dry and store clothing and expedition gear.
- **Expedition Ship Suites:** Nordic Junior Suites (322 sq. ft.) and Explorer Suites (580 sq. ft.) on *Viking Octantis* and *Viking Polaris* are similar to those on Viking's fleet of ocean ships, with wood detailing and amenities that include additional storage and seating, an expanded bathroom with extended shower and double sinks, welcome champagne, a fully-stocked mini-bar replenished daily, complimentary laundry, priority restaurant reservations and more. Explorer Suites feature two separate rooms, a Nordic Balcony and a full outdoor veranda. Additionally, each ship features one Owner's Suite (1,223 sq. ft.) that has three rooms—a living room, a board/dining room and a bedroom—as well as a 792 sq. ft. private deck with a traditional Norwegian *badestamp* open to the invigorating outdoors.
- **Enrichment On Board and On Shore:** Viking has created the world's leading scientific enrichment environment in an expedition setting. Exclusive partnerships with the Scott Polar Research Institute at Cambridge University, The Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)—as well as other prestigious scientific institutions match leading researchers and educators with each expedition. Thirty-six experts accompany each journey as part of the Viking Expedition Team, including an Expedition Leader and support staff, photographer, field research scientists, general naturalists, mountain guides, kayak guides, submarine pilots and specialists (ornithology, geology, higher predator biology and history). On board, guests will enjoy daily briefings and world-class lectures about their destination. On shore, they can assist in fieldwork or interact through experiential activities during landings—such as monitoring birds to help identify migratory patterns; accompanying scientists to collect samples; or taking their cameras ashore alongside a professional photographer to learn how best to capture scenic landscapes.

- **Environmentally Considerate:** Viking's expedition ships have set a new standard for responsible travel with an energy-efficient design that exceeds the Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI) requirements by nearly 38%. In addition to an integrated bow that creates a longer waterline for the ships, engines with heat recovery systems and Azipod® Electric Propulsion, *Viking Octantis* and *Viking Polaris* have received one of the industry's first SILENT-E notations—the highest-level certification for quiet ship propulsion, minimizing underwater noise pollution.

Booking Details

From now through May 31, 2022, Viking is special fares and reduced airfare on Great Lakes voyages. Call Viking toll free at 1-855-8-VIKING (1-855-884-5464) or contact a travel agent for details.

Media Assets

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About Viking

Viking was founded in 1997 and provides destination-focused journeys on rivers, oceans and lakes around the world. Designed for experienced travelers with interests in science, history, culture and cuisine, Chairman Torstein Hagen often says Viking offers guests The Thinking Person's Cruise® in contrast to mainstream cruises. With more than 250 awards to its name, Viking has been rated the #1 River Cruise Line and #1 Ocean Cruise Line by *Condé Nast Traveler* in the publication's 2021 Readers' Choice Awards. Viking has also been consistently rated the #1 ocean cruise line and one of the best river cruise lines in *Travel + Leisure's* "World's Best" Awards. For additional information, contact Viking at 1-800-2-VIKING (1-800-284-5464) or visit www.viking.com. For Viking's award-winning enrichment channel, visit www.viking.tv.