

PRESS RELEASE

## COSTA CRUISES PROMOTES TARRAGONA AS BASE PORT FOR CRUISES

- **Costa Cruises presented the start of operations in Tarragona. The company has chosen the Port of Tarragona as base port for one of its routes through the Mediterranean Sea. This way Tarragona is positioned as port of arrival and departure for cruises and a destination to receive European cruisers.**
- **This decision is a result of the cooperation between Tarragona Cruise Port Costa Daurada and Costa Cruises. This will enable the Port of Tarragona to be visited by 25,000 passengers of various nationalities in addition to the 15,000 this destination planned to receive. These operations will mean, according to the statistics on average spending per passenger published by CLIA Spain, a profit for all parties involved amounting to about €2,200,000.**
- **The event, hosted by the Port of Tarragona and Costa Cruises featured the attendance of representatives of the Government of Catalonia, the Provincial Council of Tarragona, the City Council of Tarragona and PortAventura World. During the presentation, stress was made of the positive impact this cooperation will have in the region's economic and tourist development.**

**Tarragona, 1 February 2017.** [Costa Cruises](#) and Tarragona Cruise Port Costa Daurada presented today the commencement of their joint operations. As from June, the Port of Tarragona will become a base port for one of the routes through the Mediterranean run by the Italian company, which is an essential stepping stone in positioning Tarragona and Costa Daurada as a tourist and cruise destination of international import.

Attended to the event, hosted by the Port of Tarragona and Costa Cruises this morning at the port facilities, **Mr. Josep Andreu**, Chairman of the Port of Tarragona; **Mr. Raffaele D'Ambrosio**, General Manager of Costa Cruises Spain and Portugal; **Mr. Fernando Aldecoa**, Managing Director of PortAventura World; **Mr. Octavi Bono**, General Director of Tourism of the Government of Catalonia; **Mr. Josep Poblet**, Chairman of the Provincial Council of Tarragona; and **Mr. Josep Félix Ballesteros**, Mayor of Tarragona.

**Costa Cruises** already offers customers an exclusive cruise to depart every Friday -from 2 June to 22 September- from Tarragona. This route, to be operated by the **Costa neoRiviera** (48,200 tonnes in weight and room for 1,727 guests), will call at Savona (near Genoa, Italy), Porto Torres (North of Sardinia), Menorca, Ibiza - Formentera and Palma before ending back again in Tarragona.

As per the intended schedule, the **Costa neoRiviera** will depart up to 17 times from the port of Tarragona. This means that a total of 25,000 passengers -adding together cruisers that will board at the city and others who will be onboard the ship from other countries- will visit the city. The above, coupled with two calls by the vessel **Costa Favolosa**, planned for September and October, means that Costa ships will visit the port of Tarragona up to 19 occasions, bringing the total to 32,000 passengers.

The **Costa neoRiviera** will be berthed in each voyage for a total of **17 hours** - from 09.00 am to 02.00 am the of the following day - at the port. Therefore, passengers in transit will be offered the possibility of enjoying -on their own or in a range of visits hosted by **Costa**- the charms of Tarragona, **recognized as World Heritage Site by UNESCO** due to the preservation of the archaeological heritage of the ancient Roman town of Tarraco. Additionally, an 8-hour tour will be offered through the **Poblet Monastery** and the **Montblanc** churches.

The proposal of **Costa Cruises** in Tarragona can be supplemented by a stay in **Costa Daurada**. For those preferring an option involving a shot of adrenaline, the company signed in 2016 an agreement with **PortAventura World**. By virtue of such agreement, passengers doing this **Costa** route have the possibility of purchasing a special package. With this new product, upon completion of the voyage back in the Port of Tarragona, passengers may extend their trip by means of one-night or two-night stays in PortAventura World including half board, transfers, access to the park and fast-track passes. In this fashion, the Italian cruise line strives to offer an even more groundbreaking, compelling travel experience.

**Josep Andreu, Chairman of the Port of Tarragona** thanked Costa Cruises for the trust placed in the Port of Tarragona and in the region as he underlined the great job done by the whole team in the Cruises Desk of Tarragona Cruise Port Costa Daurada on the strategic line of positioning Tarragona as a port of reference in the cruise sector. Josep Andreu remarked that *"Today is a very important day for the Port of Tarragona and the territory as this is the first time we are a base port of a regular cruise line. The commitment shown by Costa Cruises for Tarragona and the Costa Daurada is a landmark in the consolidation of our project and it means a great boost for Tarragona Cruise Port Costa Daurada";* and *"this is a challenge in which we will work very hard to meet the expectations placed on us by Costa Cruises"*, he added.

**In his speech, Raffaele D'Ambrosio, the company's General Manager Spain and Portugal**, wanted to stress the importance of Tarragona within the company's strategy in our country: *"We in Costa Cruises innovate to offer at all times the best travel proposal to our customers in our drive to strengthen our leadership in a highly competitive sector. We want to offer the most appealing destinations in order to provide a unique, unforgettable vacation experience. We are truly thankful to the Port of Tarragona as well as to all institutions present here today and to PortAventura World for being with us in the official presentation of Tarragona as base port for our operations and also for paving the way in the whole process, resulting in the proposal presented today. We are sure that thanks to everyone's efforts the region will continue its successful positioning as a reference in the cruise sector at European level"*.

The Italian company wanted also the voyage departing from Tarragona to be amongst the first in which customers will have the opportunity of enjoying **"Fun & Beach"**. Longer calls at each destination, access to paradise-like beaches and a wide offering of music, fun and entertainment aboard, this novel **Costa Cruises** concept becomes a new way of experiencing a cruise.

**The third speaker, Octavi Bono, General Director of Tourism of the Government of Catalonia**, remarked: *"What I really value in this agreement is the opportunity it means for the Port and for the city of Tarragona, as well as for the Costa Daurada area as a whole. Also very important is that thanks to this initiative we will promote a newly developed and better distribution of the cruise activity in the country. Globally, the figures are still small, although a good indicator of a desired needed goal"*.

On the other hand, **Josep Poblet**, Chairman of the Provincial Council of Tarragona, termed this as a "huge opportunity that may enable the Costa Daurada link tourist strategies covering both shoreline and interior areas". Furthermore, he stressed that the arrival of cruises to the Port of Tarragona will be good for "expanding the capability of offering services and visitors, thus taking the Costa Daurada into a new tourist level".

Last to speak was the **Mayor of Tarragona Josep Félix Ballesteros**: "As Mayor of Tarragona, I really thank Costa Cruises for their bet as we always said that the big prize for us would be someone going for Tarragona as origin and destination. This has been made true with the arrival of Costa Cruises and the visit of 25,000 cruises for an economic impact expected to amount to over two million euros. We will make an effort to meet the expectations. This is a challenge that we cannot miss: commerce, taxis, buses, safety, museums, people... because cruisers have to live a unique experience from minute one. Now it is our turn to live up to the challenge and we will because this is a great opportunity to improve our windows to the world".

**\*Note:**

A selection of images from the event can be downloaded from this [link](#).

### **About Tarragona Cruise Port Costa Daurada**

Tarragona Cruise Port Costa Daurada is a trademark born thanks to an strategy designed four years ago under the leadership of the Port of Tarragona to gain a foothold in the cruise sector in cooperation with the Tourism Trust of the City Council of Tarragona, the Tourism Trust of the Provincial Council of Tarragona, the Tourism Trust of the Town Council of Reus, PortAventura World and URV. In the past four years, Tarragona Cruise Port has positioned itself in the international cruise arena. Projections for this 2017 show record figures: 40 cruises and 40,000 passengers.

### **Sobre Costa Crociere**

Costa Crociere es la compañía de cruceros italiana de CarnivalCorporation&plc, la mayor compañía de cruceros del mundo. Durante 67 años, los barcos de Costa han sido auténticos embajadores de la verdadera hospitalidad italiana, mostrando lo mejor de su gastronomía y una experiencia de compras única y completa, gracias a una amplia selección de las más prestigiosas marcas italianas. Actualmente, la flota de Costa, la más grande de Europa, cuenta con un total de 15 barcos en servicio, todos con bandera italiana. Además, dos buques de nueva generación serán entregados en 2019 y 2021 (junto a otros para la marca AIDA Cruises): contarán con un revolucionario diseño 'verde' y estarán propulsados por Gas Natural Licuado, el combustible fósil más limpio del mundo, lo cual representará un enorme avance medioambiental. Costa encarna la excelencia italiana gracias a los 19.000 asociados de Costa en todo el mundo, que trabajan cada día con pasión para ofrecer las vacaciones de crucero con lo Mejor de Italia con 137 itinerarios diferentes, 261 destinos y 60 puertos de embarque.