



The Future of Innovation at Sea Is Here: Exciting New Cruise Ships for 2026

By Zachary Laks

Cruising in 2026 is greener than ever before, each new class of ship more energy efficient than the last. This year's debut ships from the cruise line members of the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) are adopting low-emission propulsion technologies, shore power plug-in capability to reduce emissions in port, advanced waste management systems, and other state-of-the-art environmental technologies – and are preparing for the use of emerging sustainable fuels.

New technological achievements are propelling not just the vessels themselves, but also next-level onboard entertainment – thrilling rides, world class shows, and innovative dining experiences.

From intimate superyachts to the largest resorts at sea, 2026 is an exciting year for repeat cruise fans and new-to-cruise travelers alike.

Here are the newest ships in the CLIA fleet.

Disney Cruise Lines: Disney Adventure

Disney Cruise Line continues to innovate with its latest ship, Disney Adventure, sailing from Singapore. Geared towards the Asian market, Disney Adventure is the first and only ship in Disney's Global Class and is among the first cruise ships built to run on green methanol, produced from renewable sources, once that fuel is more readily available. Disney Adventure carries up to 6,700 guests. Seven themed "worlds" onboard include Marvel Landing, the line's first major Marvel-themed zone, and featuring Ironcycle Test Run, an 820-foot roller coaster that is the longest such attraction at sea.

Norwegian Cruise Line: Norwegian Luna

Norwegian Cruise Line's Prima Plus-class has grown with the debut of the 3,571-passenger Norwegian Luna. Entertainment highlights include a new Elton John tribute show along Prima Plus class favorites, as introduced on sister ship Norwegian Aqua, such as the Slidecoaster, an exhilarating roller coaster-meets-water slide. Norwegian Luna's 123-suite Haven, Norwegian Cruise Line's signature luxury ship-within-a-ship retreat, expands with new Three-Bedroom Duplex Haven Suites for families or groups of friends. Norwegian Luna is designed for enhanced energy efficiency, including upgraded HVAC systems, optimized power management, and waste heat recovery technology.

Emerald Cruises & Tours: Emerald Kaia

The 128-passenger Emerald Kaia is the third superyacht in the fleet of Emerald Cruises & Tours. The new ship boasts a larger spa than on its sister ships, a new Asian-inspired Night Market Grill, and a new marina deck complete with a giant inflatable waterslide into the sea. Through its Cherish the Planet initiative, Emerald Cruises & Tours underscores its commitment to sustainability, which includes efforts in eliminating single-use plastics onboard, reducing CO2 and emissions, and social-impact projects.

Orient Express Sailing Yachts: Corinthian

The 110-passenger Corinthian is the world's largest sailing yacht (at 722 feet). The first in the new Orient Express Sailing Yachts fleet, the ultra-luxury three-masted features suites averaging 750 square feet, and such accoutrements as cuisine by French Chef Yannick Alléno, whose 17 restaurants have earned 17 Michelin stars. The yacht is capable of 100% wind-powered navigation, supplemented, when necessary, by a hybrid propulsion system using LNG. The cutting-edge yacht is engineered to allow future green hydrogen integration as technology and regulations allow.

American Cruise Lines: American Maverick, American Ranger

Two new coastal ships, American Maverick and American Ranger, are the third and fourth small ships in the Patriot Class of American Cruise Lines. The 130-passenger vessels feature cabins and suites with balconies and itineraries that sail along the eastern coastline of the U.S. The ships operate on ultra-low Sulphur diesel fuel (ULSD), with energy efficient engines and generators and have shore power connection capability. Food onboard is locally sourced whenever possible, and agritourism excursions educate guests on how their food is harvested.

TUI Cruises: Mein Schiff Flow

The Italian-built, 3,984-passenger Mein Schiff Flow, sister ship to Mein Schiff Relax, is German line TUI Cruises' newest cruise ship. Technical advancements include a dual-fuel

propulsion system that uses liquified natural gas (LNG), the cleanest burning marine fossil fuel, and is ready to use bio-LNG and e-LNG as well as green methanol, adopting the cleanest fuels as they become available. The ship is also equipped to run emissions-free in ports of call. Flow boasts 14 dining revenues and 17 bars and lounges including a burlesque bar, Le Cage.

Explora Journeys: Explora III

EXPLORA III is the third ship from luxury line Explora Journeys, owned by MSC Group. The energy-efficient ship is the first in the Explora Journeys fleet powered by cleaner-burning LNG and is ready for the use of sustainable fuels. The new “resort-at-sea” features more public space per guest than its sister ships. This includes an open-air fitness area, among new wellness-focused offerings, and an expanded area for kids. Guests stay in 463 oversized ocean-facing suites and luxuriate in a choice of five heated pools, six restaurants and 12 bars and lounges.

Royal Caribbean: Legend of the Seas

Royal Caribbean’s record-breaking, LNG-fueled Icon Class expands with the Legend of the Seas. Able to carry up to 7,000 passengers, Legend is the first of Royal Caribbean’s world’s largest ships to sail Europe and Southern Caribbean itineraries. New additions on the mega-ship include a Hollywoodland Supper Club specialty restaurant and performances of the Broadway hit show Roald Dahl’s “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.” The ship appeals to thrill-seekers with attractions such as Category 6, the largest waterpark at sea, and entertains with more than 20 bars, lounges and live music spots including a jazz club.

Regent Seven Seas Cruises: Seven Seas Prestige

Seven Seas Prestige is the first ship in the new Prestige Class from Regent Seven Seas Cruises. Prestige is the luxury lines new flagship, 40% larger than earlier ships but with only 10% additional guests – affording more space per passenger. The all-suite, all-balcony ship carries up to 822 guests in accommodations that include over-the-top two-level suites. Prestige is designed to evoke the grandeur of classic liners including a dramatic grand Starlight Atrium with twin spiral staircases and topped by a glass-ceiling dome. Behind the glamour are advanced environmental technologies.

MSC Cruises: MSC World Asia

MSC Cruises’ large-scale MSC World Asia, with a capacity of 6,782 passengers, is the third ship in MSC’s World Class series, which also includes MSC World Europa and MSC World America. The ship runs on cleaner-burning LNG and features the latest green technologies and programs, including a comprehensive onboard recycling plant. The design

throughout is inspired by Asia. New additions to the fleet include a pan-Asian specialty restaurant, a Royal Duplex Suite, and a redesigned Luna Park Arena. Thrill seekers can enjoy the longest dry slide at sea, whipping down 12 decks, with a design inspired by Singapore's Gardens by the Bay.

Windstar Cruises: Star Explorer

Windstar Cruises debuts the all-suite Star Explorer, sister ship to Star Seeker, both ice-strengthened, all-suite expedition ships able to explore polar regions and beyond. Among environmental features, the ships are equipped with shore power connectivity. Windstar fan favorites are back, including an aft marina for watersports and cuisine influenced by chefs from the James Beard Foundation – Windstar is the official cruise line of the JBF.

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