

STILL CRUISING AFTER 165 YEARS

WITH ITS INCREASING REPUTATION FOR CRUISE DEPARTURES, ONE PORT OF TYNE CUSTOMER IS MAKING THE MOST OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH.

There's been a strong relationship between the North East and Norway, since the days of the Vikings, but more recently one of the companies that has been keeping those links alive is the Norwegian shipping company, Fred. Olsen.

Formed in 1848, Fred. Olsen's links with the Port of Tyne date back more than 100 years. Now in its 5th generation as a family-run business, the company is now best known for its cruise and luxury holiday operations with its fleet of four cruise ships – *Black Watch*, *Braemar*, *Boudicca*, and *Balmoral*.

Fred. Olsen has been running holiday cruises from the Port of Tyne since 2006 and, with the increased interest in cruise holidays generally and the Port of Tyne's recent accolade as the UK's Best Port of Call, it is now looking to increase the number of cruises starting from the Port. Next year, passengers will have the choice of seven cruises – an increase from the six available in 2013, with even more choice on the horizon for 2015.

According to Nathan Philpot, the company's Sales and Marketing Director, there are plans for a series

of new experience cruises with 'taster' options for holidaymakers new to cruising and themed cruises for those looking for something a bit different.

"The benefit of the smaller-scale ships in our cruise fleet is that we can give our guests a taste of ports around the world that other larger vessels can't reach," explains Nathan. "In particular, areas such as the Norwegian Fjords have very limited access, so choosing a Fred. Olsen cruise gives you the best experience."

Cruise holidays are having a surge in popularity, with one in eight holidays in the world now taken on board a cruise ship. Fred. Olsen now has one of the highest repeat rates of any company within the cruise industry, with some cruises made up of as much as 60% of regular Fred. Olsen passengers.

Of the 32 cruise ships visiting the Port of Tyne in 2013, Fred. Olsen accounted for the bulk of the cruises actually starting from Newcastle, rather than those that visited the Port as part of their itinerary. The Port has the capacity to handle almost 10,000 passengers in a turnaround call, with six cruise and six ferry check-in desks, along with a large passenger lounge.

For Fred. Olsen's Port Operations Manager, Angela Arnold, it's the attitude of the people at the Port of Tyne that makes all the difference.

"The Port of Tyne has a great reputation that is based on the friendliness and the efficiency of its staff," comments Angela. "Nothing is too much trouble - they work really well together as a team and it shows!"

Next year, the range of Fred. Olsen cruises on offer means that cruise fans from the North of England have some fantastic destinations to choose from. "Our France, Spain and Portugal cruise will be one to look out for," says Nathan Philpot. "It's got some fabulous and unusual stops such as La Coruna and Vigo in Spain, Lisbon in Portugal and Honfleur in France."

So whether you fancy the wilderness and wildlife of Iceland, Greenland and the Northern Cape, the Baltic beauty of St Petersburg and Stockholm or the winter warmth of the Canary islands, the Port of Tyne is the place to start!

For more information on Fred. Olsen's cruise departures from the Port of Tyne, visit the website at: www.fredolsencruises.com

165

NUMBER OF YEARS SINCE FRED. OLSEN WAS FOUNDED

95%

PROPORTION OF THE WORLD'S GLOBAL CRUISE FLEET THAT CAN BE ACCOMMODATED AT THE PORT OF TYNE

600K

NUMBER OF PASSENGERS PASSING THROUGH THE PORT'S INTERNATIONAL PASSENGER TERMINAL EVERY YEAR

Pictured: Fred. Olsen's cruise ship, Black Watch, sails into the Port of Tyne.