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WOMEN WEAR THE STRIPES

A new look in deck and technical roles



Lisa Lutoff-Perlo with Celebrity officers, including Capt. Kate McCue, second right

Women wear the stripes

More women are working in cruise ship deck and technical roles but their numbers still lag. **Anne Kalosh** reports.

As a woman leader, Lisa Lutoff-Perlo, president and ceo, Celebrity Cruises, knows firsthand how tough it is to crack the glass ceiling. When she got the top job in 2014, Celebrity had never had a woman captain or hotel manager, let alone a woman chief engineer (it still doesn't). She felt that appointing a woman captain would bring visibility to her campaign for gender equality, which she espouses based on the research about how much better it makes business.

When Lutoff-Perlo, who started at Royal Caribbean in the 1980s, got her first operations role (for Celebrity) in 2005, it was 'a big slap in the face for me. It hit me so hard. Women weren't given opportunities or respected in knowing how to run operations.

'It was lonely. I was really marginalised and not treated like an equal member of the team.'

In the same way, she says, 'Women on the ships were not given the top jobs, just because the men in charge didn't think they could do them.'

Lutoff-Perlo changed that at Celebrity. She's proud that Celebrity Edge was introduced with what she claims as an industry-high 30% women crew. Typically, the numbers are 17% to 20%, she says, and in Celebrity hotel operations, the most guest-facing area, 37% are women. The line now has five women hotel directors, where it had none before.

Across the industry, change is happening, but slowly. Consider that it's still newsworthy when a woman is appointed captain. And, while the numbers of females in stripes are greater than in the past, they're still small, especially in technical roles.



Patrik Dahlgren, Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd.



Keith Taylor, Holland America Group

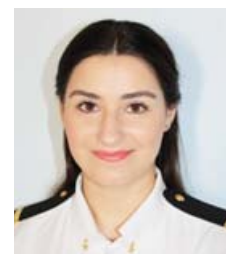
'We still have a journey in front of us,' says Keith Taylor, evp fleet operations, Holland America Group, where almost 6% of the deck and technical jobs are now filled by women at his four brands (Princess Cruises, Holland America Line, Seabourn and P&O Australia).

There's no specific target, but Taylor wants it to increase because there's 'strength in diversity.'

And when it comes to the important area of bridge resource management, he says women bring qualities like communication and teamwork. The captain can't always be right — he or she is human — so having a



Capt. Belinda Bennett, Windstar Cruises



Maria Busuioc, third officer, Carnival Cruise Line



MSC for Me enhancement
Zoe is in every cabin

The beauty of technology

MSC Bellissima debuted in March with voice-enabled virtual personal cruise assistant Zoe onboard. **Mary Bond** reports.

Sitting in the MSC Yacht Club on MSC Bellissima (meaning really beautiful), less than 24 hours after taking delivery of the second Meraviglia-class ship from Chantiers de l'Atlantique, Pierfrancesco Vago told Seatrade 'I am very happy with this prototype and the quality is very high.'

He has just come from the ship's London Theatre where he had addressed the crew telling them about the company culture, the family-run business, the opportunities onboard and the extensive newbuilding programme. They were each presented with a T-shirt emblazoned with 'MSC Bellissima Start-up Crew'. He was wearing one too.

As is the norm with Vago he does not sit still for very long and is always looking to improve and enhance the product. 'I have some ideas already for fine tuning the next newbuild MSC Grandiosa and the first Meraviglia-Plus ship (same platform but with 15mtr extra length) scheduled for delivery later this year.'

That vessel will be the fifth of 17 newbuilds being added to the fleet in a ten year period through to 2027.

Back to the new baby Bellissima. What has changed from first in class MSC Meraviglia, delivered in 2017?

'We have made some enhancements such as in the Promenade, the Eataly restaurant has been replaced by L'Atelier Bistrot, a small à la carte restaurant serving French cuisine and the Hola! Tapas Bar created by chef Ramon Freixa.'

In the aft Carousel Lounge created for Cirque du Soleil performances, the stage is wider and in the Aurea Spa, glass panels have been substituted for the rock decor.

The biggest change has been in the MSC Yacht Club which still spans three decks at the bow of the ship but the lounge on the 16th floor and the restaurant above are more modelled on the MSC Seaside prototype sharing a large panoramic window providing 'more air and light in and more visibility of the sea,' noted Vago.

There are more retail shops on the Promenade, including more brand labels to improve the offering to the Chinese market where the ship is headed in 2020, shared lead designer Marco de Jorio, ceo of De Jorio Design International.

The key unique feature on MSC Bellissima and one which is set to appear on all new deliveries is Zoe, MSC Cruises' voice-enabled virtual personal cruise assistant.

Arriving in Southampton



Developed in partnership with Harman, a wholly owned subsidiary of Samsung Electronics, and powered by artificial intelligence (AI), Zoe is in every cabin and can speak seven languages providing information, guidance and suggestions about onboard facilities, entertainment, services, or help to book a service.

New – Hola! Tapas Bar
by chef Ramon Freixa



Hardangerfjord limits calls to Eidfjord

PHOTO: AGURTKANE CONCELON

Striking the balance

How many cruise ships are too many and what can ports and destinations do to strike the balance? **Felicity Landon** reports.

Residents in tourist hotspots can feel overwhelmed by cruise ships and their passengers. The talk is of cruise ships 'belching out fumes', blocking out the sun or the view, cramming the streets with passengers or attracting in the purveyors of tourist tat.

No matter if cruise guests are a small percentage of a flood of visitors cruise ships are highly visible. Some destinations are responding – by limiting numbers, imposing taxes or offering discounts for greener ships.

Hardangerfjord in Norway imposed a limit of two ships and 4,000 passengers per day at Eidfjord in 2013.

'We were partners in the EU Cruise Gateway project [which focused on sustainability, including avoiding congestion and protecting sensitive sites]. When that project finished, we introduced among other things this limit on passengers and ships,' says Helge Møller, md of Cruise Destination Hardangerfjord. 'This is to protect the sensitive environment of Hardangerfjord.'

Towards the end of last year, Bergen announced a new policy of a maximum three cruise ships/8,000 passengers per day. This followed collaboration between the city

council, the port of Bergen, Visit Bergen and other city representatives, says port director Johnny Breivik.

The port has approximately the same number of cruise calls/passengers booked this year as in 2018 – 340 ships, 600,000 passengers. The limit is being introduced for new bookings.

There are two issues, says Breivik – first, air emissions are a big problem in Bergen and second, the city centre is compact, so passenger numbers need regulating.

'This has been an issue for residents and politicians in Bergen for several years. We are trying to find the right balance in terms of what is sustainable in this city. Our first focus is to solve the main problem, which is air emissions and the environment. After that will be the time to look at the balance between the different types of tourists, cruise and non-cruise. But today, the negative focus is firmly on cruise – mostly because of the air emissions.'

Before the city council made its decision, there were meetings with cruise reps and cruise lines, he says. 'The port is owned by the municipality and we must respect the will of the politicians and the city. The

municipality has put in place this cruise policy and also has a green strategy.'

The Port of Bergen will be holding meetings with cruise lines to discuss how limits will be implemented and how booking systems will work. However, priority will be given to ships with a good environmental imprint, including a good EPI (Environmental Port Index) score and the ability to connect to shore power. From this year, the port will also start to link its port dues, passenger fees and other charges to each cruise ship's EPI.

Breivik says most of the cruise lines are responding positively to the limit and there has been a positive response from residents to the action being taken.

'We have to do something to find the right balance so that both residents and cruise passengers have a positive situation in the city. The main problem in Bergen is air emissions – when we have solved this, I think people will view cruise ships with different eyes.'



Johnny Breivik
Port of Bergen