

MSC Cruises takes delivery of next-generation cruise ship MSC Meraviglia

MSC Cruises recently took official delivery of next-generation cruise ship MSC Meraviglia - at 171,598 GRT and with a guest capacity of 5,714 - at the STX France shipyard. MSC Meraviglia is both the biggest ship to ever be built by a European ship owner - MSC Cruises - and the biggest to come into service in 2017.



Image Source: [MSC Cruises](#) - Christening of MSC Meraviglia

She is also one of the six new ships due to come into service between 2017 and 2020 under the company's industry-unprecedented investment plan. Four of these six vessels will be built by STX France, further reinforcing a long-standing partnership that has already produced all 13 vessels in MSC Cruises' fleet, allowing the company to grow by 800% from 2003 to 2013.

MSC Cruises estimates that its total investment at STX France from 2003 to 2020 will amount to over seven billion euros, effectively making the company the country's number one foreign private investor (when it comes to export contracts.) Considering that the building of MSC Meraviglia required 1,700 workers per month (over 3,000 per month during peak periods) and nine million man hours, and that the construction work feeds into a network of over 400 suppliers and subcontractors, the economic effects of this investment are not only widely felt across the country's geography but also multiplied several times over.

The realisation of our long-term vision

MSC Cruises Executive Chairman Pierfrancesco Vago said: "MSC Meraviglia's coming into service marks a key milestone in the history and future of our company. She represents the first realisation of our long-term vision for further significant growth, which, in its first phase, culminated with MSC Cruises becoming, two years ago, the number one cruise brand across all of Europe, while on its way to further global growth."

STX France's CEO Laurent Castaing also commented: "Delivering a ship is always a time of great emotion for the shipyard: it is the culmination of three years of intense work for our employees and those of our partners, who have spared no effort to deliver on the exact date and in the quality conditions desired by our client MSC Cruises, this first ship of the Meraviglia class. Benefiting from our advances in R&D from the "Ship of the Future" programme supported by ADEME, this prototype is a great achievement that we can all be proud of and which allows us to look confidently at the next three ships."

MSC Meraviglia, the 13th cruise ship to join MSC Cruises' fleet since its inception in 2003, is 315 metres long, 43 metres wide and 65 metres high, with 171,598 GRTs. She is able to travel up to 22.7 knots and has been designed to operate in all seasons and to be able to call in most of the world's international cruise ports, offering the widest and most exciting range of marine as well as onboard features of any MSC Cruises ship to-date.

MSC Meraviglia set sail towards the Port of Le Havre for her christening ceremony on 3 June 2017. From there, she will begin her first sailing along the Atlantic coast, calling at Vigo (Spain), Lisbon (Portugal), all the way to the Mediterranean, calling in Barcelona (Spain), Marseille (France) and eventually Genoa (Italy). She will commence the first regular seven-night itinerary on 11 June, sailing from Genoa on to Naples (Italy), Messina (Italy), Valletta (Malta), Barcelona, Marseille and back to Genoa on 18 June.



Image Source: [MSC Cruises](#) - MSC Meraviglia

MoU: Building MSC Cruises World Class

At the MSC Meraviglia Flag Ceremony the two companies signed a new memorandum of understanding firming up the order of two 200,000 GRT, LNG-powered mega cruise ships, with options for two additional vessels. The four ships will become MSC Cruises' World Class. In connection with the signing, MSC Cruises and STX France also unveiled several key features of the World Class. Among other innovations, they will be equipped with a completely new generation of LNG-powered engines as well as a new generation waste water treatment system.

MSC Cruises' World Class cruise ships will feature 2,760 cabins and a maximum occupancy of 6,850 guests, the highest passenger capacity in the global cruise fleet. The vessels, which will be delivered in 2022 and 2024 – the options are for 2025 and 2026 – will have a length of 330 metres and 47 metres of beam.

The World Class' futuristic "Y" shape structure will enable panoramic sea views and increase the proportion of balcony

cabins. The ships' G bow (vertically positioned at a 90-degree angle) has been designed to improve stability, hydrodynamics as well as to enhance guest comfort. Other guest-centric innovations include family-friendly villages, a panoramic aft, and a glass pool lounge.

At the Flag Ceremony, Vago said: "As we unveil MSC Meraviglia, a new vessel that marks the start of the next phase of our growth, we are delighted to confirm another key component of our ten-year investment plan: the World Class. These new vessels will further expand our partnership with STX France all the way to 2026, with up to seven additional innovative ships to be built during this period."

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