

EXPLORA JOURNEYS IS PROUD TO APPOINT SERENA MELANI AS CAPTAIN FOR THEIR FIRST SHIP, EXPLORA I



Geneva, Switzerland – 07 June 2022 – Luxury travel lifestyle brand [Explora Journeys](#) is proud to announce the appointment of Captain Serena Melani as Master of EXPLORA I, the first of four ships which is firmly on track to set sail in Summer 2023. This milestone not only celebrates an exciting step forward towards the ship's maiden journey, but also marks a significant move in bolstering the inclusion of more women in senior positions in the industry.

Pierfrancesco Vago, Executive Chairman of the MSC Group's Cruise Division, said: *"It is gratifying to see Captain Melani join our Explora Journeys at this important moment as we get ready for EXPLORA I to take to the seas. She represents all that I and the founding family envisioned for our new luxury lifestyle brand as a disruptive force in our sector that will make it more diverse and inclusive. We look forward to welcoming more experienced women officers to the brand and our overall Cruise Division as it continues to grow and go from strength to strength."*

Michael Ungerer, Chief Executive Officer, Explora Journeys added: *"We are delighted to have Captain Melani join us at Explora Journeys leading EXPLORA I in the direction, style, and mindset we have envisioned for our first ship. Explora Journeys provides enriching experiences to explore the world and reach an `Ocean State of Mind. Captain Melani will steer our first ship to some remarkable, both` familiar and off the beaten path destinations across the world with her incredible experience as well as her passion for exploration, and respect for the ocean and nature, which reflects our own and, we wish her every success."*

Captain Melani commences a new chapter and adventure in her career and is excited to support the brand's aspiration of redefining ocean travel. Serena was first drawn to Explora Journeys as it resonated with her personal passion for the ocean, exploration, and discovery; integral elements of the brand's `Ocean State of Mind` ethos, enabling those travelling across the world to reconnect with what matters most in their lives.

Similarly, Explora Journeys' guest-centric approach echoes Serena's quest for "emotional and interpersonal connections with staff and guests both onboard and ashore."

Captain Melani commented: *"I was very impressed by the love, respect, and knowledge our owners, the Aponte Vago family, have for the ocean. Their personal involvement and care in each detail of the project, to deliver something truly unique in the market, is inspirational. Growing up on the Tuscan coast in Italy, I am thrilled to be part of a European luxury lifestyle brand and to take the helm of EXPLORA I, sailing to amazing destinations, some of which have never been reached by cruise ships before."*

Serena's impressive background led in 2020 to her becoming the world's first female Captain to bring a cruise ship out of a shipyard. In 2010, Serena, became Bridge Officer with a luxury cruise line and was swiftly promoted to Master in 2016, leading to her becoming their first female Captain and first Italian-born female cruise ship Captain. Serena began her studies at the Nautical Technical School in Livorno before gaining experience as Bridge Officer onboard different types of cargo ships. Serena was born and grew up in Livorno, an Italian port city on Tuscany's coastline which is also a major port for the cruise industry today. Never venturing too far from the ocean, she now splits her time between Italy and her home in Croatia where she lives with her husband.

On 30 May 2022 Explora Journeys celebrated the Float Out Ceremony of EXPLORA I at the Fincantieri shipyard in Monfalcone, Italy, for the next chapter of her highly anticipated inaugural journey. During her first year, EXPLORA I will visit over 132 ports in more 40 different countries. The itineraries include Northern Europe, the UK, Iceland, Greenland, Canada, the US East Coast, Caribbean, South America, and Hawaii. Sailings start from 6-night journeys and culminate in an epic 44-night Northern Europe, Grand Journey.



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About Explora Journeys

Explora Journeys is the privately-owned luxury lifestyle brand of the MSC Group, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, created at the heart of Swiss luxury hospitality. The brand stems from the long-held vision of the family to redefine the ocean experience for a new generation of discerning luxury travellers, drawing on the Aponte family's 300 years of maritime heritage. The brand's aspiration is to create a unique 'Ocean State of Mind' by connecting guests with the sea, with themselves, and like-minded people, while remarkable itineraries will blend renowned destinations with lesser-travelled ports, for a journey that inspires discovery in all its forms.

A fleet of six ships, two of which are under construction, will be launched from 2023 to 2028. Equipped with the latest environmental and marine technologies, Explora Journeys will introduce a new style of transformative ocean travel. EXPLORA I offers 461 oceanfront suites, penthouses and residences designed to be 'Homes at Sea' for our guests, all with sweeping ocean views, private terrace, a choice of eleven distinct culinary experiences, across six vibrant restaurants plus in-suite dining, twelve bars and lounges, (eight indoor and four outdoor) Chef's Kitchen, four swimming pools, extensive outdoor decks with private cabanas, wellness facilities, and refined entertainment. Inspired by the company's European heritage, Explora Journeys will provide guests with an immersive ocean experience respectful and intuitive hospitality.

To learn more about Explora Journeys, visit explorajourneys.com or follow us on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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