

Beat: Travel

VIKING EXPEDITIONS ARE SETTING A NEW STANDARD

SHIP'S AWARD-WINNING INTERIOR DESIGN

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USPA NEWS - Viking is celebrating new milestones in the launch of its expedition voyages, as the new purpose-built Viking Octantis continues its first Antarctic season. Recently, Viking guests explored at both ends of the earth, when the Viking Octantis crossed the Antarctic Circle at 66°33' S, marking the southernmost journey in the company's 25-year history; just a few hours later, the Viking Venus crossed the Arctic Circle at 66°33' N under the spectacular northern lights.

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"The Viking Octantis and her sister ship, the Viking Polaris®, have been designed for discovery—to enable our guests to explore the world's most pristine destinations in comfort and in the most responsible way possible," said Torstein Hagen, Chairman of Viking. "With our first Antarctic season underway, we are very pleased with the enthusiastic initial response from our guests, as well as from esteemed design experts."

Viking's new expedition ships were designed by the same team behind the award-winning Viking Longships® and ocean ships, including Richard Riviere, Founding Principal of internationally acclaimed interior design firm Rottet Studio of Los Angeles. SMC Design of London contributed with their expertise in the maritime sector. Together, the two firms were awarded "Design Studio Team of the Year" in the 2021 Cruise Ship Interior Awards for their work on Viking's expedition ships.

"We hope our guests will feel at home on board these elegant vessels, with spaces that are familiar from our ocean ships—such as the Explorers' Lounge and Mamsen's—as well as innovative new spaces like The Aula and The Hangar that are first of their kind in the travel industry," said Karine Hagen, Executive Vice President of Viking. "As always, our Norwegian heritage and thoughtful attention to detail are infused throughout. With sheltered outdoor observation areas from bow to stern, and a state-of-the-art stabilizing system that makes for very smooth sailing, our new expedition ships optimize exploring the remotest parts of the world in comfort, the Viking way."

- Viking Expedition Ships

The new Polar Class Viking Octantis and Viking Polaris host 378 guests in 189 staterooms. The vessels are purpose-built for expeditions, at an ideal size for safety and comfort in remote destinations. With more indoor and outdoor viewing areas than other expedition vessels, guests are as close as possible to the most magnificent scenery on earth. The architectural photos released on February 28, showcase many of the onboard public spaces, such as:

* The Aula: A stunning panoramic auditorium inspired by the University of Oslo's famed ceremonial hall, the former venue for the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony. Used for lectures, daily briefings, documentaries and films, this spectacular venue features a 4k laser-projected screen that retracts to expose floor-to-ceiling windows and 270° views.

* Finse Terrace: An outdoor lounge area just above sea level with recessed, heated seating and lava rock "firepits," the Finse Terrace was designed to allow guests the comforts of the ship al fresco while enjoying the dramatic scenery. Named after the Finse Plateau in Norway, where some of the greatest polar explorers, including Nansen and Amundsen, did their expedition training in preparation for their North and South Pole expeditions.

* The Hangar: A state-of-the-art, industry-first in-ship marina providing ease of embarkation and disembarkation of Special Operations Boats and other equipment while sheltered from the elements.

* The Bow: An important forward-viewing platform. And in the case of inclement weather, The Shelter is a comfortable, partially enclosed space for guests to warm up with a hot drink before going back out into the elements.

* The Science Lab: Developed in partnership with the University of Cambridge and Akvaplan-Niva, The Science Lab, at 380 sq. ft., is designed to support a broad range of research activities and is equipped with wet and dry laboratory facilities. Guests have supervised access to The Science Lab to learn from and participate with scientists in undertaking meaningful research.

* Expedition Central: The hub for the expedition team to consult with guests on their expedition activities and share knowledge about the destinations on a one-on-one basis, with the aid of 3D printed maps, digital screens, and a state-of-the-art spatial data visualization chart table.

* Dining Choices: The Restaurant offers fine dining featuring regional cuisine and always-available classics; the casual World Café offers an open kitchen, bakery, grill and premium seafood and sushi choices, as well as a wide range of international flavors; Mamsen's, named for the Hagen family matriarch, serves Scandinavian-inspired fare; and Manfredi's offers the best of Italian cuisine.

* The Nordic Spa: Following a day of exploration, The Nordic Spa offers guests opportunities to experience the ultimate healthy Nordic traditions, with an indoor heated pool set against expansive windows and a badestamp (wood-sided hot tub) that is open to the outside.

* Explorers' Lounge: Located high on the ship with floor-to-ceiling windows, the Explorers' Lounge provides guests an ideal space to take in the magnificent scenery, share discoveries with fellow travelers or to enjoy a drink.

* The Living Room: On Viking Octantis and Viking Polaris, The Living Room is located to maximize views of the surroundings through floor-to-ceiling windows and a library that informs even the best-read explorers. The Library is curated by acclaimed London bookshop Heywood Hill, as on all Viking vessels, as well as Cambridge University's Scott Polar Research Institute.

* Photos cover:

- (L) The new Viking Octantis pictured in Antarctica during its inaugural season.

- (R) The Nordic Spa on board Viking's expedition ships.

Source: Viking

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