

CRYSTAL®

Crystal Announces Return of Cruise Directors *Guest Favorites Are Back as Cruise Line Prepares for Launch*

MIAMI – April 24th, 2023. ‘Exceptional at Sea’ includes first-class Cruise Directors, and today Crystal announced the return of shipboard leaders as the brand continues to prepare for its inaugural season under new ownership.

Cruise veterans Rick Spath will bring out *Crystal Serenity* when the ship returns to service on July 31, and Russ Grieve will lead the team aboard *Crystal Symphony* starting with its inaugural voyage on Sept. 1. Raphael Derkson will also be returning, first to serve as the start-up Musical Director for *Crystal Serenity* and then take over as Cruise Director following Spath.

“Serving as Cruise Director is one of the most important roles onboard, and we are so excited to have this group rejoin our team,” said Vice President of Entertainment for Crystal, Keith Cox. “They each bring their own unique style which guests have come to know and love when sailing with Crystal.”

Rick Spath has been at sea for more than 40 years and first became a Cruise Director in 1984. He has been with Crystal for 18 years. The upcoming 2024 World Cruise will be the 17th voyage he has led. While he enjoys all the various parts of the world it takes him, his favorite region is the South Pacific. Originally from New Jersey, Spath now calls Charlotte home where he spends his vacations playing golf and spending time with his wife and four children.

Russ Grieve is excited to return and lead *Crystal Symphony* out on her inaugural voyage. An industry veteran, Grieve served as Cruise Director on the Azamara Quest for several years before joining the Crystal family in 2018. Prior to becoming a Cruise Director, he spent several years acting and singing, including a seven-and-a-half-year stint in the Broadway musical ‘MAMMA MIA!’. A California native, he enjoys working out and spending time with friends and family when not onboard.

Raphael Derkson was raised in Montreal and took to music at an early age. He graduated from the Montreal Conservatory of Music and continued his education at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, and the Herbert Bergof Acting Studio in New York. Attracted to travel, the entertainment world aboard cruise ships was a natural fit. Derkson joined Crystal in 1999 first in the role of Musical Director and eventually taking on the role of Cruise Director.

Additionally, Crystal Brand Ambassador **Fernando Barroso de Oliveira** will be on board *Crystal Serenity*’s full World Cruise. He will be hosting guests in some daily activities and participating in some tours and shoreside events sharing his legendary advice and expertise.

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Crystal Serenity and *Crystal Symphony* are currently undergoing extensive refurbishments in Trieste, Italy. When the ships debut, enhancements will include larger, updated suites with artisanal finishes, cutting-edge onboard wellness as well as a revamped spa and gym. Guests will also find new a new pickleball court along with refreshed entertainment and events.

Planned voyages will travel throughout the Mediterranean, Northern Europe, Canada and New England, Alaska, the Caribbean, through the Panama Canal, the Middle East, Asia, Australia and New Zealand.

Book one of the exceptional new itineraries by contacting your travel advisor, visiting [crystalcruises.com](https://www.crystalcruises.com), or calling 1-800-446-6620.

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About Crystal

Exceptional at Sea

For more three decades Crystal has been synonymous with exceptional, award-winning voyages. Last year, the A&K Travel Group acquired the Crystal brand and its two most beloved vessels, *Crystal Serenity* and *Crystal Symphony*, ushering in a new era of *Exceptional Suites*, *Exceptional Service*, *Exceptional Dining*, and *Exceptional Experiences*.

Awards

- *Condé Nast Traveler* Readers' Choice Awards winner for 27 years in a row
- *Travel + Leisure* World's Best Awards Winner 24 years in a row

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