



News Release

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MARITIME HOTEL ACADEMY TO AID ISLAND CRUISES LAUNCH

Austria's Maritime Hotel Academy has won an exclusive consultancy contract to provide product design, recruitment and training services for Island Cruises, the new joint venture between UK tour operator First Choice and Royal Caribbean International which launches a Mediterranean cruise programme in March.

The 40,132 gt Island Escape - formerly Royal Caribbean's Viking Serenade - will operate two seven-night itineraries from Palma, Mallorca, with 1,680 passengers and 500 crew.

Under product design, the Academy is developing combined entertainment and food & beverage concepts featuring casual, non-traditional dining. Input on entertainment will also include devising production shows based on latest best-sellers such as Moulin Rouge and Harry Potter.

A consolidated training plan for all ship's officers and crew - including those outside the hotel and entertainment departments - has been drawn up by the Academy's service trainers, management trainers and health & hygiene specialists. Training of senior managers has already begun.

Academy consultants are also assisting in hotel and entertainment staff selection following recruitment advertising and audition notices which attracted hundreds of replies. "We are looking for candidates with that extra something in view of our innovative product proposals," said a company spokesman.

Recognised as the leading faculty of its kind, the Salzburg-based Maritime Hotel Academy has provided consultancy and training services for more than 25 cruise lines since being formed in 1989.

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