

BORDEAUX, A CRUISE PORT OF CALL WITH WIND IN ITS SAILS

Since the start of April 2018, there have been 44 calls at the cruise-liner terminals of Atlantic Port of Bordeaux. Having grown over many years, Bordeaux has become an unmissable port of call, with 58 calls in total confirmed for 2019. This is a record, while the number of calls has more than doubled in under ten years.



Credits: Christophe Bouthé / Cruise Bordeaux

Arriving in Bordeaux on a cruise liner is a unique experience for passengers. Sailing up the Gironde estuary, viewing the greatest Médoc vineyards and châteaux, swinging spectacularly around quays classed as world heritage sites by UNESCO, and mooring with unrestricted views of the *Place de la Bourse* and *Place des Quinconces* squares and the *Miroir d'eau* reflecting pool. Even before they step off the boat, travellers enjoy countless sights. And the cruise companies have made no mistake about this destination, praising it as much as their passengers do. In particular, this year has featured maiden calls, synonymous with liners' first ventures to the Gironde capital. Among these newcomers have been the prestigious *Seabourn Ovation* (198m) in Bordeaux and the *MSC Magnifica* (294m) in Le Verdon-sur-Mer. 33,303 cruising tourists visited the region in 2018. 31% of them were British, 23% American, 20% German and ... 3% French.

This growth in cruising is the result of a partnership with Cruise Bordeaux, a firm coordinated and run by Atlantic Port of Bordeaux, which brings together public and private stakeholders related to this business activity to promote Bordeaux as a destination in the broadest sense and its qualities as a port of call, especially with regard to cruising companies.

Better access for cruise liners

Because a high-voltage cable and two bridges are passed on the trip, sailing up the estuary involves a degree of technicality that passengers are not aware of.

The Port of Bordeaux Authority, the *Bordeaux Métropole* urban agglomeration and RTE (France's electricity-transmission operator) made the most of recent works on the Bacalan-Marquis high-voltage cable to co-finance improvement on Bordeaux's capacity to host cruise liners by raising the high-voltage cable to align its physical restrictions with those of the *Pont d'Aquitaine* suspension bridge.

Since the end of September 2018, liners that are 262 metres long (compared to 255 metres before), 32 metres wide, with a 7.5-metre draught and 50-metre air draught, can sail into the *Port de la Lune* harbour in Bordeaux in any weather conditions, fluidifying access to the town's quays.

"As we're keen to improve conditions for hosting large liners that are too big to reach the centre of Bordeaux, and to encourage this business activity so it continues developing, we're working on installing a terminal devoted to the Pauillac municipality, as close as possible to the vineyard and one hour away from Bordeaux," explained Christophe Masson, the chairman of the Atlantic Port of Bordeaux board of directors. *"The preliminary technical and economic research required for carrying out this project, which forms part of the port's strategy, are already underway. The terminal should be completed by 2021."*

About Cruise Bordeaux

Coordinated by Atlantic Port of Bordeaux, Cruise Bordeaux brings together public and private players that help develop river and seas cruises on the Gironde estuary: Port of Bordeaux Authority, the Bordeaux Métropole urban agglomeration, the Bordeaux Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Médoc Atlantique community of municipalities, Pilotage de la Gironde (a ship-sailing service), the Pauillac tourist information centre, the Nouvelle Aquitaine region, the Gironde department council, Voies Navigables de France (France's navigation authority) and the local public authorities involved in river tourism: Royan, Libourne, Blaye, Bourg-sur-Gironde, and Cadillac.

Praised by ship-owners and cruisers, Bordeaux (including both banks of the estuary and land of the Gironde) is a unique call for discovering the heritage, gastronomy, history and culture of a world-renowned region.



About Atlantic Port of Bordeaux

Atlantic Port of Bordeaux is an industrial and logistics platform containing seven terminals spread over the 100 km of the Gironde estuary, the largest estuary in Europe.

Ideally situated on the Atlantic seaboard, the port handles eight to nine million metric tonnes of cargo per year (the equivalent of 400,000 truckloads) at its seven specialised terminals that reflect the diverse economy of France's greater southwest region:

- *Le Verdon: Containers, port of call for cruise ships*
- *Pauillac: Hydrocarbons, A380 logistics centre*
- *Blaye: Grains, chemicals*
- *Ambès: Chemicals and petrochemicals, hydrocarbons*
- *Grattequina (under development): Heavy-lift cargo, aggregates*
- *Bassens (multi-bulk terminal): grains, containers, timber, oil, aggregates, coal, recycling traffic and more*
- *Bordeaux – "Port de la Lune" (terminal dedicated to passenger traffic): port of call for cruise ships*

Atlantic Port of Bordeaux also services 25 ships per year in the dry docks and puts nearly 4,000 tonnes of scrap metal from end-of-life ships back into the circular economy.

The activities at Atlantic Port of Bordeaux generate over 4,900 direct jobs in 200 businesses.

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